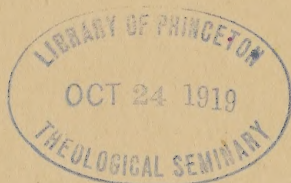
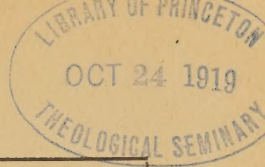


THE SECOND COMING

J. C. MASSEE



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The second coming



The Second Coming

By

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PREFACE

This is a volume of Sermons. With a few alterations, they are published as stenographically reported at the time of their delivery. Their appeal is to the heart. They are published as they were spoken for the express purpose of setting forth in the simplest way to the average man the two aspects of our Lord's return to this earth. A right understanding of this truth invariably produces in the believer a quickened spiritual life and an intensified understanding of and love for the Word of God. The proclamation of this message brings conviction of sin to sinners and induces in them a living faith in our living Lord.

As these addresses were designed both to teach and to inspire, the not infrequent repetition and the use of many illustrations will alike be understood. The book is sent forth in the earnest wish that it may contribute something to the hastening of the coming again of our Lord Jesus.

PART I

WHAT THE RETURN OF THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST MEANS TO THE
BELIEVER.

CHAPTER I

The Practical Value of the Doctrine of Christ's
Return.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S RETURN

The question of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth is one which today challenges most keenly the interest of Christian men all over the world. A returned missionary recently said to me that he found it perhaps the most debated question in the church, and that the line of cleavage between those who hold different opinions concerning it is clear and distinct. Many books are being written on the subject. There has never been a time when so many men advocate with such intensity the doctrine of the physical and imminent return of the Lord. Nor, on the other hand, has there ever been a time when this doctrine had so many pronounced and able opponents.

There are three groups of those who think, speak and write upon this subject. There are those who say, with a leading rationalistic theologian, that no man who has been really gripped by the modern method of critical study believes for a single minute that Jesus will ever return to this earth. There are those who believe that he will come again at the end of a millennium period into which the church and the world must grow gradually; that when man has perfected his insti-

tutions and made the world fit, then the Lord Jesus Christ will come and reign in the world thus prepared for him. Then there are those who believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is to return to the earth at the beginning of the millennium period to inaugurate that period. These understand that the world is not getting any better; that the church will not triumph; that Christ must come to set in order the things of His kingdom and bring order out of chaos, thus fulfilling prophecy and re-establishing the throne of God with the throne of David in the earth.

Those who hold this view have a program which seems to them to be perfectly scriptural and sanely simple. It is not primarily, however, my purpose to discuss the program. I wish rather to bear a simple testimony to a profound conviction of the certainty and the imminence of the Lord's return. I wish also to indicate some of the practical values that are bound up in this doctrine of the return.

First, then, it is a question primarily of the Bible. I know those who hold the pre-millennarian view are charged with being "literalists," and that to be a literalist is an intellectual and a critical crime. It is not a modern method to let any book, certainly not the Bible, say what it says. Whatever it says, it must have meant something else, and he who insists that the Bible was written to bear a message simple and authoritative stamps upon himself at once the reproach

of not being a scholar nor of belonging to the school of the intellectuals.

However, we are willing to bear that reproach. For to us the Bible is the Word of God. It is the only source of our knowledge, our creed, our inspiration. It has the authority not only to reveal, but to command, and we lend obedience to what it says. We have no other rule of faith or doctrine. There are those who tell us that it does not matter what the Bible says; that we must concern ourselves with what it signifies. But we are concerned with what it says. The little girl was all right and commands my sympathy entirely when she said: "If Jesus did not mean what He said, why didn't He say what He meant?"

Now, there can be no question that the Bible declares in emphatic terms, oft repeated, that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again into the earth; that He will take the throne of His father David; that He will rule over the nations, and that He is to reign here in the earth one thousand years. Even those who deny that He will thus come, making His return to have a metaphysical and spiritual significance only, freely admit that the early Christians believed that He would return; that the apostles taught them that He would return. These declare, however, that the early Christians were simply mistaken in their belief and did not know what they were talking about when they declared the truth of this doctrine.

But for us the testimony of the Book is unbroken and infallible. It is both inviolate and inviolable. The prophets proclaim His coming to reign in righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared that He would so come. Paul and John, and Peter and James and Jude, all authors of the New Testament epistles, declare without question that He will return. This doctrine was at once the inspiration and the hope of the early church. It became their motive for holy living; their guide in church discipline; their appeal against terrors of persecution, and their confidence in the hope of immortality.

The scriptures reveal the return of the Lord as one event in two sections. According to the scriptures, He shall come first FOR HIS SAINTS, at which time the dead in Christ shall be raised and the living saints shall be caught up into the air to meet the Lord, I Thess. 4 : 13-17: (the rest of the dead shall not be raised for one thousand years). Later the Lord shall come back to the earth WITH HIS SAINTS, according to Jude, ten thousands of them, and take the throne of His father David and rule in the earth. We believe and teach that this coming is to be physical and visible and audible. The very same Jesus who went away into Heaven is to return, according to the statement of the two witnesses in Acts 1 : 10-11: "The Lord Himself is to descend from Heaven with a shout," according to the testimony of Paul in I Thess. 4 : 13-16. We would perhaps,

not one of us with another agree entirely as to all the details or events of the program, for many things are involved in the immediate preparation for His return. BUT ABOUT THE FACT OF THE RETURN, we who hold the blessed hope have no variance. The Word of the Lord has established it, and we rejoice in the blessed assurance that unto them who look for Him, who love His appearing, shall He come the second time without sin unto salvation.

But there lies also in the doctrine of the Lord's return THE ONLY ADEQUATE INSPIRATION *for life's God appointed tasks*. Those of you who are familiar with your Bible recall the fact that the Lord had given to His early disciples a task far beyond their equipment or their ability. Think what it must have meant to them to have faced the world without prestige or patronage, or place or power, and to face the world with a commission from their Lord to go forth and evangelize it for Him. They were to become world travelers, these Galilean peasants, who had no knowledge of the world and no purses adequate for such demands as that travel must make upon them. They were to mold the world's thought, these unlearned and ignorant men. They were to stand before kings and change the current of human events. They were to bear the world's burdens, comfort its sorrows, give it wisdom in perplexities. Indeed, they were commanded to do nothing else than to undertake the task of the

moral reconstruction of the world. Can you not imagine how they felt? Some of us feel that it is impossible to go forward with the little task committed to our hands. The small field we are commanded to occupy and to till seems to us big beyond any possibility of our mastery. But these Galilean peasants had had the companionship of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Now they had passed through the travail of Gethsemane and the passion of Calvary. They had hoped, and then hope had died. Hope had been revived, however, when He appeared from the grave. Then came the collapse of all hopes when He went away. They would see Him no more. They stood paralyzed, trembling, before the stupendous task He had left them to do. How could they dare undertake it? Suddenly as they stood gazing into heaven, their hearts sinking within them, two men in white appeared and said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing into heaven? The same Jesus you see going into heaven shall so come again in like manner as you have seen Him go." Immediately heart comes into them again. They gird their loins for the task. They go out to undertake it, whatever the doing of it may bring to them, persecution, hardships, exile, self-denial, immeasurable sacrifices, even death itself. All this they did joyously in the faith that leads to the accomplishment of the task given.

In one of Browning's poems he describes the visit of a young artist to the master, Michael

Angelo. As he is about to take his leave the young man is made to request of the master the privilege of clasping his hand that he may gain from it some strength and grip to go back to his own task, a task which in the light of the master's great genius and great work seems at once his challenge and his despair. Michael Angelo gives him his hand and looks deep and long into his eyes, and then the young man is made to request again a larger privilege—that he may lay his head down upon the master's breast and hear *his* heart throb. Thus he would be strengthened and equipped as never before for his task. And so Michael Angelo draws him to him, puts his head Michael Angelo draws down his head upon his heart and holds it there with a caressing and tender hand. And then as the young artist straightens up Browning puts upon his lips these words: "Now I go back to paint on my poor canvas forever more proudly, because the breath of the master has been upon my head."

It is thus we feel who have come into the possession of this immortal and blessed hope. He has breathed upon us. He has suffered as we suffer. He has borne our burdens, carried our sorrows. He has been limited by our limitations. He has said to us: "In the world you shall have trials, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And so there is no task too great, no burden too heavy, no duty too binding if we love and labor in the light of that blessed hope that

He is to come again. Our reward is in Him. There is no greater joy than in the anticipation and inspiration of His approval. We yearn for the time when we shall hear Him say: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The third practical value lying in this doctrine of the Lord's return is that here only *we have adequate inspiration to personal purity*. John declares in memorable language in the first epistle, the third chapter, verses one to three: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God. And such we are. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Every one that hath this hope set upon Him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

There is no one of us who does not know how serious the pinch of temptation often is. It seems so easy to make compromises, so difficult to sustain the rigid integrity of our highest and best ideals. The world is ever plausible. Satan is ever a fair promiser. It is not easy, often even with the very best of spiritual poise, always to make just and righteous moral discriminations. Social custom, accepted usage, civil legislation approve the standards and applaud certain things that to the Christian in the light of Christ's presence seem to be inconsistent, out of consonance with his

Christian character. It is not enough for one to know the law. Too often

— “They know the right and approve it, too;
Condemn the wrong and still the wrong pursue.”

Ethical culture, moral idealism, religious legislation, none of these nor all of them are sufficient to direct into right channels Christian conduct. Holiness is the one inescapable demand God makes of His people. Where can we find the inspiration sufficient for that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Surely it lies in the promise and prospect of our Lord's coming again. It was thus David thought when he wrote: “I have set the Lord always before me. Therefore I shall never be moved.” Again “They looked unto the Lord and were radiant.” So “every one that hath this hope set upon him purefieth himself even as He is pure.”

Some years ago while preaching in New York, the manager of one of the great hotels there came to me after the message and asked me to tell him what to do with a certain question of practical import which greatly troubled him. He was a Christian man. As manager of this hotel, he had to administer the affairs of the barroom and was directly and personally responsible for the sale of intoxicating liquors, which he believed to be inconsistent with his Christian life. He wished me to tell him what to do. But that was a thing which I could not do, for it is not my business to be conscience for God's people. My

answer to him was this question: "Do you believe the Lord Jesus is coming again to the earth?" "I certainly do and hold it as a blessed hope," was his reply. Then my next question was: "Would you be willing to have Him come and find you administering the affairs of that barroom in connection with the hotel of which you are manager?" With that he straightened and said: "No, I see the matter perfectly, clearly. There is nothing for me to do except to surrender my position, lucrative as it is, and then get a position in which I shall not be compromised as a servant of Christ and in which I shall not lose my testimony for Him."

A young girl came to me and asked for my approval of her dancing, saying: "Pastor, all my friends dance. Can't I dance, too?" I gave her my immediate consent. "Surely, you can. You seem to be graceful enough to undertake it. You certainly have the privilege of God's free child to do as you please and follow your desires. By all means, dance if you wish." With a look of great relief, she said: "That simplifies things for me greatly. I did not understand you to preach that way. I must have misunderstood you." Then I said: "Before you go to your first dance or take your first dancing lesson, let me ask you to go up to your room, close and lock your door, sit down and read your Bible for half an hour. It doesn't matter just where you read. When you have your mind filled with the word of God, kneel down and ask the Lord Jesus Christ to come along with you

to the dance. If He will do so, by all means go. If not, perhaps you had better stop and wait—and wait.” Tears came into her eyes and rather indignantly she said: “Why did you not tell me at first that I could not go. You know the Lord will not go and His presence and fellowship in my life mean more to me than all the dances in the world.” And so for that young girl, for all time the problem of her social pleasures or doubtful amusements had been settled by the simple remembrance of the imminent presence of her Lord.

I had a practical experience some years ago when I had gone to New York to spend some weeks as a guest of a friend, a minister, who became my pilot around the city during my first visit. One day after we had tramped until we were weary, he suggested to me that we go to one of the theaters. Like Tennyson: “Man may come and man may go, but the show goes on forever.” He argued with me that though I did not go at home, I was away from home now and nobody would know. After all, the theater was an educational institution. One needed to be broad and cultivate a broad sympathy with the customs of the people. No doubt I should find it diverting and recreational. Being tired, I needed it. Like many another, I swallowed the Devil’s bait, hook and line and sinker. We went in. I placed my hat under the seat, sat down by my friend. To this day I do not know what was on the bill. A clown first came out, that is all I remember, for suddenly my mind was filled with the

thought of the Master's presence. I saw Him with that company in the moment of His coming. I became uneasy and unhappy and immediately reached down for my hat and said: "I am going out." My friend said: "Are you sick?" "No." "Don't you like the show?" "I don't know." "You will lose your money." "It is already lost to me." "But you have just come in." "Yes," said I, "and I am just going out." "Well, why?" "Well, I hold in my heart the hope of Christ's coming to the earth at almost any time, and should He come to-day, I should not wish Him to find me in this place." I went out, never to return. And in that one remembered experience, the question: "Which side of the theater door?" was permanently settled for this man, as I believe it would settle it for every child of God. One may go anywhere, say and be what he will in this world, if the things he undertakes are in keeping with the presence of Him for whose coming we look and pray.

Finally, the doctrine of the Lord's return furnishes us *our only hope of immortality*. What a tragic recurring of death and sorrow the pathway of man through the pages of history reveals. No human home has ever escaped the ravaging presence and power of this last enemy of God and man. No human heart but has felt its dread, feared its presence, despaired of deliverance from it. So far as I am able to judge, there is in the Word of God *no promise of immortality apart from the coming again of Jesus Christ unto the*

earth. I had been preaching many years before I discovered this fact. Then one day as I sought some word of comfort for one who had been stricken with all the pangs and sorrows which death brings, God revealed it to me. It is written in the pages of His Book. The only comfort for death is the hope of immortality. That hope is bound up with the promised coming again of the Lord Jesus. Here is the word. I Thes. 4:18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort ye one another with these words."

Here then is the hope and the security that can steady us in the presence of the grim monster which destroys all our happiness, lays toll upon our homes, and spreads a pall of despair over all our hearts. A great speaker, after many researches made in the Congressional Library at

Washington, declares that in 2200 years, prior to August 1, 1914, on all the battle fields of this world, there had been fewer than 750,000 deaths in actual conflict. That is terrible enough! There is nothing beautiful in death. It is all horrible. Death is the last enemy of Jesus Christ. For when Christ has overcome death, then He will deliver up the kingdom unto the Father. But since August 1, 1914, through the ravages of this present great conflict, perhaps a minimum of six million men have gone down to their graves. Death is walking with militant tread and uttering a voice of challenge to Jesus Christ. Christ must answer that challenge. If death is to triumph and go unscathed calamity: "Lord Jesus, come quickly. Break the bands of death. Open again the doors of the grave. Lift upon us the light of Thy presence in the midst of this world darkness of doubt and despair." We believe that He will come, for the defeat of death is dependent upon the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth. Christ is Lord of life and has challenged death with a purpose to rob him of his sting and the grave of its victory. Upon His coming depends our hope for the opening of the long closed graves, for the waking again of the sleeping dead, for if in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most desperate.

The truth of the business is that all the agnosticism which denies the coming of Christ into the earth, hinges upon that deeper agnos-

ticism which denies the physical resurrection of the dead, both His and ours. It is part and parcel of that which discredits the supernatural and denies the interposition of God in the affairs of man.

But Christ is coming again. The dead in Christ shall rise first, the graves shall give up their sleeping victims and the weeping which endures for the night will give place to the joy which comes with the morning.

An eminent southern minister tells the story of a visit made by him down to an old mountain town in Georgia. He had been there many times before, and as he came back this time he was asked by one of the old mountaineers: "Do you remember Aunt Polly?" Remember the dear old saint who had been with him in the meeting the year before? He certainly did. He was told that she was very sick, and so went up to pay her a friendly visit, if possible to add a bit of Christian comfort. But he found her at death's door—unconscious, or seemingly so. The children had been summoned from far and near to her bedside, but she did not know them. Restlessly the old hands moved to and fro upon the white coverlet of the bed. The minister spoke to her, but received no answer. One of her daughters accompanied him through the hallway and as they passed he caught sight of the mother's old Bible lying upon a little table. It was worn and soiled. Its leaves were torn and marked with many a penciled mark, indicating

the blessing and encouragement received on the long life journey of Christian faith and work. Inspired by a sudden desire, the minister took the little volume in his hand and walked back into the room. Taking up one of the old hands, he held it for a moment in his own, then laid the Bible in it and pressed her other hand upon it. Stooping down, he said to her: "Aunt Polly, do you know that book?" Suddenly, as if recalled from a far journey, the old body ceased its restless motion, the eyes opened and a look of bright intelligence came into her face as she said brokenly: "I do. That is my precious Bible. I have been loving it and pouring over it for sixty years. Of course, I know it." Then, said the minister: "Do you know the Lord Jesus?" She looked up at him as if dazed by his question and said: "Why, know Him? Child, of course, I know Him. I have been lying here for two days waiting for Him to come. That is my only hope now." And then she closed her eyes and slipped away to be greeted on the other shore by Him who should bring her again with Him some day when He comes back for His saints, to call them up from their couches where they sleep in the graves in the earth, in company with that great host of those who await His coming and who shall together with them be caught up into the air, so that they may be forever with the Lord.

Surely, this is the dearest truth and the most practical of all Christian hopes, of all the Chris-

tian doctrines. "Come quickly, Lord Jesus. Come quickly."

CHAPTER II

The Return of Christ in the New Testament

CHAPTER II

THE RETURN OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

All men look to the future with their eyes fixed either upon a throne or upon a grave. Multitudes there are who believe that human progress is just the procession, endless and unvaried, of men who, at the point of the bayonet of inexorable fate, step out into the deep, dark, dismal abyss of death. Few there are who believe that the grave is but an incident, that indeed it will not be for all men even an incident, that there are some who will triumph over the grave and find their goal and destiny in the triumphant presence of the Son of God.

All Christians, like ancient Gaul, are divided into three parts. Three groups of us there are: Those who believe that Christianity is simply a help for right living in this present world; that its aim and ultimate result is to teach men to be clean and God fearing; to promote in them a right relation to their fellow men, and to make this a better life, and a better world in which to live it. There is a group of Christians who believe that Christianity promotes, in a vague way at least, a heavenly home, promises us a vague heavenly place into which we will somehow enter in a spiritual way beyond the grave. Then there is a

group, relatively small but rapidly growing, of those who believe and have believed through all the centuries, that the climax of all human life and the ultimate result of all Christian faith is *the coming again of Jesus Christ into this world*; that He is coming not primarily for judgment, that His appearing is not to be an occasion of startling amazement, of consternation and despair to those who love Him. Whatever it may mean to those who are without faith in Him, to those who know and love Him, His coming is to be the supreme joy, the supreme ecstasy, the supreme happiness of the eternities. There are those who believe that the gospel moves forward with a certain distinct and definite aim; that from its beginning to its end there is one continuous process and progress and that known unto God from the beginning is the end which we preach in the proclamation of Christ as Saviour and as Lord to all men.

Mark lays his gospel upon this foundation: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God." From that moment, throughout His life story, in the tragedy of His death, in the triumph of His resurrection, in the glory of His ascension, in the miracle of His presence, in the regenerating and transforming power of His gospel in the life we live, that gospel moves on to a definite goal. The apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, tells us in Colossians 1: 18, what is the end of that gospel.

It is that Jesus Christ is to have pre-eminence over all things in heaven and in earth. In the creation and in the church, He is to be head. Unto Him every knee is to bow; unto Him every tongue is to confess; and He, sitting as King, is to rule this whole world as His dominion, and all its peoples as His subjects.

Now, we need, I think, to get hold of that conception of the gospel. Men, for the most part, are like those caught in a crowd. Even Christian men move and yet get nowhere. We are as in a public assembly where every man is on his feet moving among his fellows with no goal, no objective, no ultimate end in view. The gospel is not such. It does not mass men in assemblies, to leave them moving to and fro without progress. The gospel is the great inspiring power of God. He assembles men into a varied moving organization, looking toward one great destiny and the achievement of one great objective. Well instructed Christians believe that God's Book reveals a divine plan of the ages; that there is also a well-defined program for the church in this age, and that there is one divine event to which the church and the world move with equal steps, though the church moves with joyous, and the world with laggard, heart.

When a Christian looks back into the past, his horizon is filled with a cross and a grave; the cross on which the Son of God hung twixt heaven and earth, bearing in His own body our sins; the

grave into which He went down to bear our guilt and bury it there. As one sees Him, He understands the significance of that cross and that grave. The cross on which He died and the grave in which He lay and from which He arose again, are definite things. He was, on the cross, a definite Person; lying in the grave and coming out again, He was a definite Person. Where is He now? What is He doing? What is He to do? What of Him in the future? These questions challenge us. Know, therefore, that the gospel of the Son of God moves forward to a definite objective, a definite goal. Here is the gospel program: Its first step begins with the supernatural birth. He was born of woman, a virgin, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit. Its second step in the program, is a sinless life, of one who was tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Third, His death was vicarious, substitutionary. Having no sin, He gave up His life for sinners. It was not taken away from Him. He gave it and took it again, and therefore the Father loves Him. The fourth is His triumphant resurrection. Peter tells us in the Pentecostal sermon that death could not hold Him because He was sinless. The seeds of death in sin had not been sown in His mortal frame. He died, but not for Himself. Therefore, He burst the bonds of death asunder. He broke open the gates of the tomb and came forth leading captivity captive. When He had accomplished that, He entered for us into His inheritance in the heavenly places. The ascension

on high is the fifth step in that divine program. He simply waits now at the right hand of God, ever making intercession for us according to the will of God, until the *fullness of time when He comes again*. The sixth fact of the gospel story, as authentic and true as any is, that Jesus is coming again to the earth.

These six great facts constitute the gospel story. Not one of them can fall to the ground and leave us a whole gospel; not one can be rejected and leave us a whole Christ. The only Christ of the Bible is the Christ of the supernatural birth, of the sinless life, of the vicarious death, of the triumphant resurrection, of the glorious ascension and of the certain coming again. He is the Christ whom we cherish, whom we worship and whom we love, and, above all, to the intelligently instructed, the Christ for whom we look again. It is absolute folly to assert out of misapprehension of the purpose of this instruction to say: "This means nothing to me." It is disaster for any man to be indifferent, if he is Christ's man. This gospel of His coming again is a vital part of His story. It challenges us with a divine imperative. *Faith, of necessity, involves a forward look*. Christian faith must ever concern itself with the anticipations of the divine promise of revelation at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Now there are three or four things to say in regard to the goal. I think I have been able thus far to put into your mind the thought that

we, today, as Christians, look forward toward a definite place, a definite God appointed goal of all thinking, of all desire, of all expectation. Then let me say that the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into this earth in physical, bodily form, to take the throne of David and to rule the world in righteousness and truth, is the goal toward which the *whole gospel message* looks.

THE APOSTOLIC PREACHERS

This is the goal first of all, in the *gospel message as proclaimed by the apostolic preachers*. As far as I am aware, there were only two apostles whose sermons are recorded for us, the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul. Peter preached more than once, and his sermons are recorded for us. Paul preached many times and several of his sermons are recorded. Of the other apostles, there is no record of the message they bore, though they went everywhere preaching the gospel. The testimony of Peter is clear and definite, as shown in Acts 3:19-21, "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ, who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things." He urges men to be reconciled to God because Jesus has provided redemption and because He has been received into heaven until the restitution of all things, when

He must return and their salvation will be complete.

Peter holds forth in that sermon and Spirit-inspired record the distinct and definite statement that the salvation offered to the world and received by the Christians is not to find its consummation until Jesus comes out of the heavens which have received Him.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica to correct some impressions in their minds concerning him and his message when he was first among them. He wrote to tell them that he told them the same things at first he now tells them in the second epistle. They believed that if Jesus is coming again there is no need of concerning themselves with the practical affairs of this life. A mother said to me only yesterday: "If the Lord Jesus is coming again, then why encourage me to keep my son in college, why educate the smaller children? Then why not give up everything else?" The exhortation in Thessalonians interprets some of these things in a message of the apostle Paul: I Thess. 4 : 9-12, "But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed ye do it toward all the brethren that are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more, and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk becomingly

toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing." Let the women keep at home and not be busybodies. The proper attitude for the Christian is not one which displays idle hands, frivolous minds, souls lightly resting upon oars, but one in which every man guards himself, every soul is kept clean, every life pure, every one expectant of His coming again. I Thess. 5 : 12-19, "But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward all. See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all. Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward. Quench not the Spirit."

But the point is that Paul preached the second coming, *always preached it*. It was his first message and his last message. There is not a single letter he writes in which he does not reiterate this divine hope that somewhere has been called the one far-off divine event toward which all the centuries run.

AS UNFOLDED IN THE SCRIPTURES

The goal of the gospel message *as unfolded*

in the scriptures is the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the earth. One verse out of every twenty in the New Testament has to do with His return. Five New Testament writers, James, Jude, Peter, John and Paul, look with unbroken unity to this goal. Their inspired writings sparkle with promises concerning it, which shine like stars in the clear evening sky. Some of their testimonies are as follows: James 5: 7, "Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord"—This word taken in connection with the probable fact that the epistle of James is the Holy Spirit's inspired wisdom for the Christian in business, and that the author is encouraging men who love the Lord Jesus to remain steadfast in their faith, in the midst of very real temptations which assail in the business world, is intensely practical. It is a question to be considered by the wage-earner and the wage-payer. It involves the necessities of labor and capital alike. The cries of the poor, the sense of oppression by the defrauded, the grinding weariness of the daily task, the inequalities of life between those who possess and those who do not, require high courage and constant patience. The goal to which all such necessities of faith turn, as men struggle to maintain both the integrity of their faith in God, and their fellowship with their fellows, *is the coming of the Lord Jesus.*

In like manner, Jude encourages the believer in the midst of a greater world inequality. It is

something to know that the prosperity of the wicked is doomed; that the judgments of this world and of the men of this age are false judgments; that every form of wickedness is to receive its just recompense of reward. Men have always struggled with the fearful temptations that Satan sets before them to envy, to distrust, to querulous complaint in view of the seeming prosperity of the wicked, in the face of the frequent trials and adversities of the godly. Jude reminds us that as far away in the past as Enoch, God had given the promise through prophecy that "The Lord would come with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all and to convict all the ungodly of their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaketh great swelling words), showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage." The judgment of the wicked world thus depends upon the coming of the Lord with the ten thousands of his saints.

Peter, likewise laying the confidence of our faith deep and strong in the historic and prophetic facts of our Lord's gospel, tells us in the first chapter of his first epistle that there are three essentials to a vital and complete faith. In the first chapter, verse two, he reminds us of the *blood of Jesus Christ*; in verse three, of the *resurrection of Jesus Christ*, and verse seven, of the *revelation*

of Jesus Christ. This is in perfect keeping with the gospel he preached and with the same gospel as declared in every writing of the holy scriptures.

When we come to the Pauline epistles, we find them so rich in teachings on this question that we may turn almost at random to any one of his letters and find this truth the outstanding truth. To begin with his first letter, which is also the first letter to the Thessalonians, we find that marvelous and comforting exhortation of the fourth chapter, verses 13 to 18: "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus *will God bring with Him.* For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Again in Colossians 3 : 1-3, "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that

are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God." We find a practical exhortation to holy living coupled with the manifestations of Christ in glory, Philippians 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians seems to be the Spirit's inspired direction to the Christian in politics, as James is the spiritual wisdom for the Christian in business and as the First Epistle of John is instruction for the Christian in society. The heart of the Philippian epistle is: "Your citizenship is in heaven." It is of vital interest and concern, therefore, that we connect this statement in the first clause, chapter 3, verse 20, with the last clause. Taken in its entirety, the passage reads: "For your citizenship is in heaven, whence also we wait for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things unto Himself."

But if this is the word of inspiration and encouragement for the Christian who is involved in the practical affairs and therefore in the daily and practical temptations in life, it is none the less the word of encouragement and exhortation for the Christian ministry.

Paul, in the last epistle, which Canon Farrar beautifully calls his "Swan Song," gives this charge to his son Timothy: "I charge thee in the

sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, *and by His appearing and His kingdom*: Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching." (2 Tim. 4 : 1-2) Titus likewise gives exhortation: (Titus 2 : 11-14) "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the *blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works."

But the climax of scriptural revelation concerning this blessed hope is realized in John's writings. I John 3:1-3, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is. And every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure"; and Rev. 22:12-20, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is * * * He who testifieth these

things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen; come, Lord Jesus." Thus the canon of scripture is closed with an ecstatic promise of the return and an exultant prayer for the realization and fulfillment of that promise. *There can be no doubt therefore that the goal of the gospel as revealed in the scriptures, is the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE GOAL OF THE ORDINANCES

No less true is it that the goal of the Christian ordinances, is the return of the Lord. There are two of these, the Lord's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We are inclined to make much of baptism, and have been ever ready to wage controversies concerning its form and those who are privileged to receive it. The church has suffered loss through a failure properly to apprehend and to observe this ordinance. But the ordinance of baptism is to be administered to the believer once only and that as the initial act of his publically confessed Christian life. It indicates vitally, in symbol, the burial and resurrection of our Lord.

But the Lord's Supper is to be often partaken of and the divine interpretation of this holy supper is that as oft as we observe it, we do show forth the Lord's death **TILL HE COME AGAIN**. Thus, every single time we gather about the table and partake of the supper, we proclaim our faith in and expectation of this great event. That is the message of the supper and that should become

the inspiring motive for our frequent gathering around the table of the Lord. We do not there proclaim Christian charity, the breadth of our Christian sympathies, the universality of our Christian love, the worthiness of our Christian life or any other thing save our belief, in *the fact of His vicarious death and in the reality of His triumphant return to this earth.*

THE GOAL OF THE CHURCH

The Lord's return is not alone the goal of the gospel story and the goal of the church ordinances, but it is the ultimate goal of the church itself. Consider the church as an organism, a life organized for the tasks and service of an intelligent body in the earth. Thus its members have the necessity for co-ordination and collaboration in the business committed to it. Considering this, the church can contemplate no smaller task than the conquest of the world and the gaining of a throne for its Lord and Master. If the church is an organism indwelt of God and an organization directed by and empowered through the Holy Spirit, then its dominating passion and purpose are those given by the Holy Spirit. It must seek so to make conquest of the world as to put the Son of God upon the throne of God in the world again.

Consider the church as the body of Christ. It is unthinkable that we should conceive of the body as complete with the head in heaven while the body remains on the earth. The constant

yearning of the body is for reunion with the head, and the constant desire of the head would naturally, by a spiritual corollary, be the full and final union with the body. Hence His necessary return.

But the church should be considered perhaps more essentially and constantly as the bride of Christ. We are espoused unto one husband through the gospel. That was the unusual announcement of the forerunner when some of his overzealous friends came to him, critical of the fact that the Lord Jesus, who had been baptized by him in the river Jordan, was now far out-reaching him in the making of disciples. John's famous answer, recorded in John 3 : 28-29, was: "You yourself bear me witness that I said: I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." Christ is definitely here called the bridegroom and the statement is made that He hath the bride. Now we are told in Revelation 22:17 that the bride joins voice with the Spirit in inviting men to come to Christ to drink of the flowing waters of salvation and life. The Spirit and the bride say come. (Another interpretation of this passage is possible and is given elsewhere.) It has been the church indwelt of the Holy Spirit through all the centuries that has given the gospel invitation as here recorded. Thus the church is

identified as the bride of whom the forerunner spoke. But far more than this, the church, in Revelation 19: 7 and 9, is identified as the body of Christ. For of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, clothed in white garments, it is declared at once that she is the bride of the Christ and that her white garments are the righteous acts of the saints.

It can readily be seen that there can be no completion of the marriage between the bride and the groom, till the two come together. The Groom must come for His bride and the bride must be caught up to be with her Lord. This shall be the consummation of His desire and her's.

Should you have gone some years ago by boat from Savannah to New York, you would have seen probably just out of Savannah, back from the shore line a little way, a white cottage. As your ship passed, a woman in white might also have been seen standing upon the vine-covered porch waving a white handkerchief toward the ship. Had you asked the captain or one of the old travelers on this line who she was, he would have told you that for more than twenty years she had greeted every outgoing and incoming ship. Pressed for further information, you would have been told that many years ago she stood on that porch to wave farewell to her lover and betrothed husband, who had gone to sea with the promise that he would come and at the end of his next voyage would make her his bride. But he had not since

returned. She had waited in patience for more than a year, then gradually her soul became obsessed with the notion that he went out on every ship and came again with every returning one. And so she stood to bid farewell to the outgoing and welcome to the incoming ones. Perhaps you would have said: "What a pity; she has been crazed by her waiting." But the captain would have said to you: "That may be true. But this certainly is true, that the day they take away from her the hope of his coming again, that day they take away from her life and that which sustains it. She could not survive the shock of realization and of such disappointment."

So the earliest group of those who compose the bride of Christ, standing upon Mount Olivet, waived Him a tearful farewell as He was received out of their sight up into glory on the wings of the cloud. Heavenly messengers stood by her side and said: "This same Jesus whom you have seen go thus into heaven, will come again in like manner." From that day until this, the bride has been expectant of her Lord's return. The tarrying has seemed long, the disappointments have been many. But the hope lives and while the world may call us a bit crazed to hold on to that blessed hope, we know that if we be deprived of that hope, if the expectation of His return be taken from the heart of the church, then the heart has lost its life and its inspiration to live. Oh, yes, He is coming again. One of these days upon the Shekinah cloud of

glory, He will appear in the heavens and speak with the voice of the archangel, and sound the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall come up out of their graves, wiping the sleep of death from their eyes, opening deaf ears, so long in silence waiting for that voice. Then those risen ones, together with those who await His coming, shall be caught up into the air to be forever with the Lord. That is not the end, but the beginning of the rapture. With Him His bride shall abide there within the heavens for a time, until the consummation of all things. They shall then return with Him to the earth to sit with Him in His throne and with Him administer the affairs of the nations of this earth that shall bring their glory and honor into His kingdom.

THE GOAL OF THE CHRIST

But His coming again is the goal of the Lord Jesus Himself. He proclaimed it to His early disciples. When Nathaniel was brought to Him from his meditations under the fig tree, Jesus greeted him with a revelation of his own intimate knowledge of Nathaniel's character. When that revelation called forth a confession of Nathaniel's faith in the Master and also an expression of amazement at his divine knowledge, Jesus said to him: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." John 1:51.

Again He declared explicitly to His disciples as recorded in Mark 13:24-27 that He would return. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light. And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." When put upon oath by the Sanhedrin, he affirmed under oath, as recorded in Mark 14:61-63, the certainty of His coming again: "But He held His peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and saith unto Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven. And the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of witnesses?"

His coming is the goal of His conflict with sin. That work which He begins in the act of regeneration, can only be complete when the redeemed, regenerated man is glorified with his Lord. Thus the spirit tells us in Hebrews 9:28 that "Unto those who wait for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

But not only is His coming again pre-eminently *the goal of His conflict with sin*, it is

also the *goal of His victorious conflict with death*. How thickly marked is the pathway of the human race with the gravestones of death. Not a single home that has ever been built in the earth, but has been ravaged by this grim and terrible monster; not a single heart that has ever beat in a human bosom but has been gripped by the fear of this fearful foe; not a single life in all the generations of men, with two exceptions, has missed the pangs and pains of dissolution. It is a worthy goal, for Him who is to put all things into subjection, before He finally delivers up the kingdom to His God and Father, that He should put death, the last enemy of God and man also, under His feet. But that victory is to be and can be accomplished only when He comes again. The gospel statement of I Corinthians 15:51-57 is that of Thessalonians 4:9-13 and it will at once appear that the hope of man's triumph over death, the hope of the resurrection, the hope of immortality, all hinge upon the coming again of our Lord into this world. Death's final defeat depends upon our Lord's ultimate return.

What is your attitude? One practical question arises. The fact of the return is certain; the time uncertain, the event imminent. What is the attitude of the Christian church? What is your attitude to it? The stories of two lads recently told indicate the wrong and the right attitude of the church. First: the boy came home from church one Sunday, rushed into his mother's presence and

in great excitement said: "Mother, what do you think! Jesus is coming again!" And the mother answered: "How do you know, dear?" and her very tone was enough to raise a multitude of doubts and misgivings. But unabashed, the little fellow said: "My teacher told me so today, and it is true. Jesus is coming again." The mother made no further comment and the lad went away. The next day after school he came rushing tumultuously into his mother's room with this question literally leaping from his lips: "Did He come?" The mother looked up from her sewing and said very calmly: "Of whom are you talking?" "Why, Jesus, of course! Didn't I tell you He was coming?" "No, of course, He is not here!" A look of great disappointment overspread the lad's face, and then after a moment he said with a sigh: "Well, I guess He has stopped up at the teacher's house and hasn't gotten here yet. I will go out to play until He comes." And he never mentioned the matter again.

Thus, alas, it has been with the church. Disappointed in the time and in some of the prophecies of those who have prayed and ardently yearned for His coming, *the church has gone out to play*. It has played so long and so faithlessly that it is all infrequent now that she ever mentions the fact of His return. *We can play until we forget*. We can play until we lose the power to desire or to expect that return, or even to recognize Him when He comes. All about the church,

today, are multiplied signs in perfect consonance with the prophecies and teachings of the inspired Word, declaring His imminent return. But the church has played so long that she is at once ignorant of, and unconcerned about these spring-time buddings of the branches on the tree of prophecy.

The second story is of a little lad five or six years old, son of a naval officer who holds the blessed hope and teaches it. The father said to his little son one day: "Do you believe that Jesus is coming again into the earth?" "Yes, sir, sure I do." "Would you be glad to see Him?" "Sure I would." "Well," said the father, "if He should come now, what would you say to Him?" And the little fellow answered: "*I would say 'Aye, aye, Sir,' and salute Him.*"

That is the perfect spirit of readiness, of expectation and of joy in the presence of this so great event. Shall we not cultivate the spirit, live the life, assume the attitude and prepare the welcome born of just such a spirit of readiness and desire? "Behold, He comes, and His reward is with Him. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus."

CHAPTER III

The Return and Full Salvation.

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THE RETURN AND FULL SALVATION

Full salvation depends upon a full gospel. This is self-evident. A full gospel depends upon three great fundamental facts revealed in the evangel of Christ. Peter presents them in the first chapter of his first Epistle. They are: The blood of Jesus Christ; the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and the revelation of Jesus Christ, in the second, third and seventh verses. Let us consider these three great facts in the order given, for that is both the spiritual and logical order.

Redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ. The first necessity of redemption is forgiveness of sins. Sin is declared by Isaiah in the first chapter of his great prophecy, to be "a wound and a bruise and a festering sore." It is the scarlet stain. It is the crimson of blood poison. There is no chemical known to man that can remove or change the scarlet color. Sin is deep, desperate, damnable. Jeremiah agrees with Isaiah that sin is incurable by any human means, though multitudes have tried to rid themselves of its presence and overcome its power. Jeremiah in 2:22 declares: "For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord Jehovah." Sin is the

stoniness of the stony heart. Paul declares in Romans 2:5: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

Sin is rebellion. John in his first epistle declares that lawlessness and sin must be put away. No human life ever bore such burdens as the burden of the guilt of sin. Every man, realizing his real condition before God, cries as Cain cried in the day of his great calamity: "My sin is greater than I can bear." Banished from the presence of God, separated from the eternal Father, sin is indeed the blight and curse and the blasting experience of man. Sin brings forth but one result. Over and over again it is written in God's Word, as in Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sins, it shall die." And in Romans 3:23, "There is no distinction, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." And in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." James 1:12-13: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to them that love Him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man." But you are tempted when you are led away by your desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death. Over against this great

statement concerning the character of sin, this statement lies: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." No single trace of guilt has ever been washed away from any single human soul in any other fountain of cleansing. I know there is objection in the minds of modern materialists to what they are pleased to call the religion of the shambles. Men leave the churches of Christ with the statement that the blood theory of atonement is nauseating—men whose god is their belly, whose business is to make life one of constant indulgence and who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Again and again the inspired Word declares: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." In all God's heaven, in earth and in hell, there is no means for the forgiveness of sins, save the blood of Jesus Christ—no possible cleansing, no possible escape, no possible redemption save in the fountain opened on Calvary, the crimson tide of which flowed forth from the pierced heart of the Son of God, if we are to trust the revelation of the Bible.

"Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures," Paul tells us in the 15th chapter of I Corinthians. Our God had told us long, long generations before, that the blood is the life. So when the statement is made in the gospels that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins, it means that His life was laid down for our life, His punishment was our punishment, His stripes were our

stripes, His experience was our experience. For us He went down to hell, tasted its depth of humiliation and suffering—and when He hung on the cross, the sinner died in Him. The sinner's sin was put to death in Him. Thus his guilt was buried, sin's power broken and his stains cleansed.

Some years ago there came into the Blue Ridge mountains a young school teacher, just graduated from college. The college years had made strenuous demands upon his strength. Delicate in frame, not robust in health, he had been selected for the position of teacher of the school by correspondence. The school to which he came had been notorious for the fact that the big boys of the school permitted no teacher to remain more than a month or six weeks, with the result that the community had grown up to manhood proud of its rowdyism and ignorance.

About one hundred pupils assembled in the schoolroom on the first day the young teacher appeared. They looked upon him with contempt. He would be an easy mark to their brutal humors and efforts at intimidation. Imagine then, their amazement when quietly stepping to the platform he said: "We begin this morning a six months' term of this school. We must and will have order from beginning to end. We cannot otherwise learn. That is the thing for which you come to this school." A smile of derision for which there was no attempt at concealment went around the schoolroom. Catching and quickly interpreting

this derisive smile, the teacher said: "Do not misunderstand me; I shall not measure my physical strength against your brute strength. I purpose to have you make laws for the school and enforce them, too. Now, if you will propose the rules by which the school shall be governed, I will write them down." The proposal seemed to seize the imagination of the student body, and one after another they proposed a law, first against stealing, then against lying, and so on until ten laws had been written on the board. Then the teacher said: "That is enough. Ten laws were enough for God to govern the chosen nation by. They are enough for the moral universe. They surely will be enough for one small school like ours. But having made the law, there must be a penalty fixed for its violation. What do you propose in the event of the breaking of one of these laws?" Instantly one of the larger boys proposed that when the laws were broken, the violator thereof would receive not fewer than thirty, nor more than forty, strokes with a black gum switch. And so the penalty was written beneath the commandments and the school proceeded to business.

For six weeks all went well. Not a ripple upon the surface, not a disturbance of the harmony—the school began to take itself in earnest. And then one day the teacher was informed that the dinner pail of one of the boys had been stolen and the food eaten from it. The culprit had been discovered. The lad who proved to be the thief

was a frail-bodied little fellow, who bore not only the stamp of extreme poverty, but of extreme timidity as well. He had been clothed in what was evidently his father's cast-off suit. His coat, much too large, was pinned up tightly around his neck; the trousers, much too long, were cut off and turned up around the bottom.

The boy admitted his guilt. The teacher secured the rod, called the culprit to him and required him to remove his coat. Instantly in a paroxysm of fear and shame, he began to beg that he might have the flogging with his coat on. But the teacher said the law must be obeyed, or all law would fall. The law required the flogging to be administered upon shoulders without the coat. Slowly the little fellow unbuttoned his coat and removed it. To the amazement of all, there was nothing beneath it except the bare skin of the emancipated little body. Then with streaming eyes the teacher said: "God knows I hate to strike you, and I would not if I could otherwise uphold the law. But the law must be maintained, and there is nothing else for me to do."

He raised the rod, but before it descended one of the larger boys in the room stood on his feet and said: "Hold on a minute, teacher, I would like to take the place of this lad and take his flogging for him." The matter was put to a vote, and the school unanimously voted for the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. The older boy re-

moved his coat, bent his shoulders and took the punishment.

Then, to test the school, the teacher said to the little lad, "Come now and take your punishment." But instantly every pupil in the school was on his feet with indignation, saying: "No, indeed you don't. You have punished him in the person of his substitute. The other boy has taken his punishment and therefore you dare not strike him."

As the story came to me, the sinner against the law, escaped by pure grace, then threw himself upon his knees before his friend and deliverer, clasped him about the knees and with choking voice said: "Bob, I will do whatever you want me to do as long as I live." Such love had conquered him.

And so it is with the sinner. Before God, naked, in need of covering, he must bare his shoulders and his soul, to be whipped for sin. Then the strong Son of God took his place, and God Himself can not lay upon the believing sinner the punishment which his Saviour had taken for him. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sins. He bears our punishments. That is only one-third the story—

"Free from the law—oh, blessed condition;
Jesus hath bled and there is remission."

But is that all? Paul tells us in I Corinthians that if only in this life we believe in Jesus

Christ we are of all men most pitiable. There is a philosophy which declares that the religion needed is for this life alone. That the task of religion is to make me clean and honest and true, to give me poise and balance and a true relation to my fellow men. If one has a religion which works betterment for this life he may chance the hereafter. If that is all, then we are of all men most pitiable. Forgiveness of sins is not merely escape from punishment—not even merely the reformation of conduct. No, we may have from God His divine nature, so changing us, transforming us as to make us new creatures, with a new power and life, and inspiration and reward. Since we may have this transformation of life, we must have it. And so the second great fact of the gospel is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, in connection with the resurrection of Jesus Christ we must understand that upon that resurrection two facts hinge: First, we are begotten unto a living hope, and second, we are given an incorruptible inheritance, reserved for us in heaven, *to be revealed and completed at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. I wish to reverse that order, for I think that one is cause and the other effect. One would not dare to brave the next twenty years of the life to be lived in this world apart from an absolute assurance of immortality. He could not bear the forces that almost certainly will sweep this world through if there were not

the passage out of the fire and flame into the incorruptible inheritance. Oh, my soul lay hold upon this hope! It is eternal life, the full fruition of which is to be realized when Jesus comes again. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ is an absolute necessity for the realization of immortality. The return of Christ is an absolute necessity for the realization of the eternal life He has given us, and the realization of that reward which awaits us in the world to come. It is a great hope—heaven itself and all the final rewards of the saints.

A dear friend said two or three days before her death, as she lay racked and broken by a terrible suffering, "Oh, let the Father take me to heaven, out of this terrible suffering. For the present trials shall break me, but heaven holds the reward." She had seized out of the scriptures the one cry for deliverance in keeping with the divine inspiration—the incorruptible inheritance. Oh, the Christian knows that he shall live with God in the incorruptible heavens through all the eternities. He knows that he shall see his loved ones and talk to them there. He knows without a single question the reality of the life beyond the grave. Think you that those whom we have known and loved have been blotted out—ceased to be? No! they await us. Years may lie between us and them, but that treasure awaits us in heaven. It cannot be lost or wasted. It is ours, kept by the power of God through faith

unto salvation, yet to be revealed. We are receiving interest on it today. Our Father, through the atonement, left an incorruptible inheritance to us in trust, and we now receive interest on it. Here is the first: Jesus said, "My peace give I unto you." Peace, because death has been undone of its hurt. The fear and the consternation and the gripping anxiety concerning death has been taken away by Christ. "My peace I give unto you." And then He says, "My power I give unto you." "Ye shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you. I go to my Father, but you wait for the promise which you have heard from Me." And then He tells us that we have security. Well may the Christian rejoice in the tenth chapter of John, wherein the Master said, "No man shall pluck them out of my Father's hand." Satan, with all his power, the evil forces about us and within us, shall not jeopardize for one single second the perfect security of the believer. We stand upon a rock and are encircled by the arms of the Eternal and are kept by the power of God unto salvation. Peace and power and security—what an interest to receive upon our deposit of faith. What an anchor to hold us when temptations assail, when but for it the soul would be swept from its moorings in the angry sea. To be kept in peace and given power and security through His blessed Word—what a boon! None of these things exhaust what He has promised of the heavenly peace. We revel now

in the anticipation of heaven's fullest security; but we await the day of its revelation when He comes again.

Do you remember, prior to 1914, we had been told that our German friends had a great word? "Der Tag"—"The day." The common form of salutation among the officers of the army and navy, among high political persons, in greeting each other was to pronounce these two words as if they had been magic, "Der Tag." It was to every one of them the day of great expectation, the day of great opportunity, the day of dawning greatness, the day of world empire, the day when, according to their conceit, the spirit of the German nation should become the healing of the world. Alas for them! It was the day of doom, the day of destiny, the day of despair, the day of destruction, the day of national death.

But we who serve the Lord and look for His return to the earth have a spiritual "Der Tag." That great day is the day of His return.

Another King aspires to world dominion. Another body of those who dream of one great Governor of the world breathe "Der Tag" as the ambition of their souls. We will come to the realization of that dream when Satan's power has been broken. He is coming whom the heavens have received until the time of the restitution of all things. He will open the graves and smash the Devil's power, and the day will dawn when the sons of God will be forever liberated from

death and from mortality and from the fear thereof. There are nearly six thousand saloons in the city of Chicago. What a change it would be if at twelve o'clock tonight in Chicago every saloon should be closed forever more! What will the day mean on the 31st of May of this year when at midnight every saloon in Ohio shall close? God speed the day and its great change.

But God reminds us of a day which shall bring a greater change than that—the day when He shall come and in the twinkling of an eye every child of God shall be caught up out of the world; not a Christian left in it; not another voice to proclaim the gospel message—the Holy Spirit gone! What a world in which to live!

Of the day of destiny for sinners, the day of hope and the day of deliverance for Christians, John gives us a fearful picture: "We know we are of God; the whole world lieth in wickedness." There surges into our hearts two impulses—the surge of desire for deliverance, the surge of love for our friends who lie in darkness.

The heart of the Master yearns in pity over His people that this great fact means nothing to them. The very church has come to think His coming an unreal dream. That the preacher who now proclaims it has talked and thought until he has gone mad with theology. But one out of every twenty verses in the New Testament backs up this preaching and assures the return of the Lord. Hear! Give credence to what is told you.

As you believe in the blood, as you believe in the resurrection, as you hope for the incorruptible inheritance, fix your hearts upon the revelation of Jesus Christ!

One morning it was my privilege to stand in the Union Station at Chicago. The famous Black Hawk division was coming home—trainloads of them. Outside and within gathered a great crowd of their friends, hearts aglow with pride, eyes moist with welcome, hands fluttering their greetings. As they drew into the station we heard the band begin to play, "Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." Out of the horrors and uncertainties and dangers of the grim battlefield they were coming home again. But in that great crowd there were certain silent ones—widows who wore the dress of widowhood, children who bore the marks of orphanage, friends who looked with sad eyes into the faces of the marching heroes, thinking of the faces they would never see again until the last day, when the earth and sky would stand before God's judgment seat. Some would not come again. A field in Flanders had claimed their lives. The battle-scarred ground of French soil perhaps was their grave—but they were not coming again. And as I stood and watched, the tide of enthusiasm never rose above the steady underlying note of death and disappointment. It hung like ceremonies of the grave upon the hearts of those who made welcome their returning ones.

I see another day—when our Lord shall come.

He is coming suddenly like a thief in the night. One shall be taken, another left. One at the mill shall be left grinding at her wearisome task while the other shall be relieved of her toil forevermore. One in the field shall be swept up on wings of light and the other shall go on at labor.

I have two young friends, a young married couple, who have two small children. When they first came to study and to accept this truth of the Lord's return for His saints they had been reading one night until a late hour, discussing its wonders of promise and of judgment. After they had been asleep for some time one of the children in the adjoining room called. The father awoke and went in to comfort the little child. The mother did not waken at first. After the child had been comforted and cared for she insisted that her father should lie down by her on the bed and put his head on her pillow, and, with a true father's heart, he remained with the child, frightened of the dark and restless in her loneliness. He lay by her in silence. In the other room, the wife disturbed by the absence of her husband, suddenly awoke with startled wideness of eyes, threw out her arms to the other side of the bed. There was no one there. Instantly a fearful conviction seized her heart that while she had slept the Lord had come. Her husband had been caught away, and, as she told me afterwards when talking to me of it, her first thought was to call

him and then to rush through the house from room to room, though assured in advance that she would not find him, then to settle in unutterable despair to that awful separation of the two of whom the Lord had taken one and left the other. When his voice answered from the darkness she said it was as the lifting of a sentence of death itself. One taken and another left! That day is to be as terrible as God's burnings of fire to the unsaved, but the ecstasy of the eternities to the redeemed—the day of our Lord's revelation. Ought it not be a tremendous inspiration, a consuming passion for the souls of men? How can we go on as if it meant nothing to us? How can we leave the lost to die in unfaith? How can a great church with this gospel preached to it remain indifferent for a single second to the unsaved multitudes about?

A young military officer said recently: "Why, there can never be any permanent peace in this world till Jesus comes again." Thank God that one of the soldier boys came back with that word as the first word of his greeting. Jesus comes to make peace because He is the only Saviour. You dare not believe that Jesus is coming again to this world without a passion and a compassion for the souls of men.

I remember perfectly that Sunday morning in March, 1879, when a lad, I saw the world on fire. Some thoughtless smoker had dropped a match or cigar end into the debris in a fence

corner. Fanned by the wind, it had sprung into flame and directly the fence line was burning. That March day, which had come in like a lamb, was going out like a lion. The wind was blowing a terrible gale. That gale seized a burning ember from the fence, lifted it across the road into the straw and leaves of the forest, setting them aflame. Then, seizing another ember, carried it on fifty yards further and another a hundred yards. Directly out of that roaring forest and flaming field the wind bore the burning brands and set them down elsewhere to become the center of new conflagrations, until soon field and forest and fences were aflame. And I said to myself, as I remembered, "That is what this world needs to have done. Let one heart burn with love to Christ. Let this heart of mine burn until the Holy Spirit, seizing some ember of my soul, shall blow the flame into your heart and lift it on to other hearts until this world is swept of its sin by the burning fires of the Christ of God."

"I know a world that is sunk in shame,
Of souls that are weary, of hearts that tire;
I know a name, a name, a name,
Can set that world on fire.

"Its sound is a brand, its letters flame.
Christ is the world's desire—
His is the name, the name, the name
Can set that world on fire."

CHAPTER IV

The Return and Sanctification

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THE RETURN AND SANCTIFICATION

“And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—I Thess. 5 : 23.

This is a very distinct and definite prayer for the sanctification of all God's children. Since you and I are involved in the prayer, it behooves us to ask immediately what is this thing which is to be realized in us if the prayer be answered. What is it to be sanctified? Certainly it is not a question of sin. It is not primarily concerned with the cleansing from sin or from sins. Should you turn to the seventeenth chapter of the gospel of John, in that great intercessory prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ you will find that in the very heart of the prayer, having declared that He glorified God in the earth, that there had been no flaw in His life or in His conduct, He makes this tremendous and tremendously challenging statement: “And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be

in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me."

The sanctification of the saint is identical with the sanctification of the Saviour, and certainly the sanctification of our Lord Jesus Christ was not the cleansing from sin. The Holy Spirit witnessed that that holy thing which should be born of the Virgin should be called the Son of God. Likewise, He witnessed that through all His life He was without sin. He Himself challenged Satan, saying, "The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." The sanctification of Jesus was the same thing which the spirit of God seeks for the saints. The sanctification was then primarily a setting aside unto a divine relationship and a calling forth unto a divine task. Jesus was the Son of God. In one of the passages which shall be quoted He is called the great God, our Saviour. There is never a single point of difference in any of the utterances of the Holy Spirit on this question. The deity of Jesus Christ is absolutely affirmed over and over again, and, being affirmed, He reiterates the statement of the perfect unity between Christ and God. He said: "I come to do thy will." "The Father and I are one." "I do always the things which please Him." And then, having established this perfect relation between Himself and the Father, He declares that He came to do the Father's will in the world, to lift it back to God. The significance of the sanctification of Jesus Christ found expression in

the surrender of the legitimate from His life. Giving up of the right to marry, the right to become the father of children, to enter into business, to hold government positions, the right to be as other men in this world, so that He was separated unto a divine relationship. Having come for a divine task, He gave himself to that.

It required not only the surrender of the legitimate, but the acceptance of many burdens not His own, and to be rejected and scorned, to be blasphemed, to endure the spittings of men, to stand forth scoffed and ridiculed and tortured, and then to have laid on His body as He hung on the cross the blows that were mine and the cruel sins that were yours and the stripes that belonged to the lost race of sinful and degenerate man.

My sanctification demands the same experience that He has—the all inclusive and exclusive relationship to God, as definite, as compelling, as distinctive as the relationship between husband and wife, excluding all others.

The saint and the Saviour are one with the Father—unity of purpose, of life interests, identity of personality, so that the one is brought into such relationship with God that he is able to say: “It is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

But immediately when I come there I have laid upon my shoulders and upon my soul the

divine task. As it was His task to lift the world to God, so, too, on His behalf it is my task to bring the world back to God. He Himself said in the last days of His earthly revelation: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The divine relationship enjoins the divine task. The sons of God are as the Son of God. As He is, such are we also in the world.

These two things, the divine relationship and the divine task, differentiate the Christian from all other men. There is no part in this prayer for the unsaved man, nothing in it that includes him. It is outside the range of any possible interest for him. He is beyond the scope of the divine pleading here. It is impossible for a sinful man to be sanctified. He needs to be saved. He must be cleansed. His problem is the sin problem as presented in the Son of God offered as Saviour. His great question is the question of the establishment of a divine relation to God. That is beyond the range of his soul's horizon. Not a single item of hope or faith could he bring within the range of the fulfillment of this prophecy or this prayer, "May the very God of heaven Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

My heart goes out with a great yearning to those who are without Christ, for they are also absolutely without hope in the world. There is

a certain terrible word written which tells us that for those who are without Christ there is a certain looking forward to judgment and a fearful expectation of that judgment. What a contrast there is between the saved man and the unsaved man. The saved man has a great hope—though life is just as unequal to him as to his fellow who is not saved. Its hills are rugged, its paths are treacherous, its experiences are often trying in the last degree. Humiliations and limitations are upon him, but he looks forward with a hope and expectation *that when Jesus comes again* all this will be banished. All humiliations, even the disappointment in his own conduct, even the desolation of disease, even the last great experience of death will be banished from his memory and he will stand forth liberated and glorified. For him will happen what happened for the preparation of the way of the Son of God. The mountains were leveled, the valleys were filled, the highway of holiness was made on the earth.

But the ungodly are not so.

In the very first Psalm (contrary to the usual interpretation, this is a Psalm of prophecy concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth a second time): "The ungodly are not so. They are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore they shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." And God shall say to them, I hear you call, but I will not heed; even as you

heard me calling through repeated invitations and refused obedience.

No, the ungodly are not as the righteous. Indeed, there is a great distinction.

I turn again to the old Book and in Hebrews 9 : 27 and 28 find this statement: "*And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die and after this cometh judgment*, so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him unto salvation."

That and that alone is the prospect of the unsaved man. Death, then the grave and beyond that the judgment by Him who sits upon the throne, terrible in His majesty, awful in His vengeance.

It is appointed unto man once to die. The condemnation of that death has destroyed the whole race from Adam until this moment. I read a sentence in the Word of God which declares that God has committed to Jesus Christ the judgment because He was the Son of Man—not because He was the Son of God, but because He is the Son of Man. There is no escape from the judgment of that manhood which He wore. He knew perfectly all man's temptations. When Jesus Christ, the Man of Nazareth, tempted and tried with all the frailties of human life, but who resisted the devil—when this Man sits on the judgment throne the sinner standing before Him will be stripped of his last excuse for sin. The Man of all men

will prevail. He does not need that any should tell Him the secrets of men, for He himself knows what is in man.

I put over against that verse, "It is appointed unto man once to die and after that cometh judgment," the next verse, "So Christ, also having been offered to bear the sins of many, *shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation.*" Jesus is not only coming to judge the sinner, but to sanctify completely and entirely the saint. He will bring him through all life's trials to a victorious end and the bestowal of a divine reward for his faithful endurance of earth's trials, and discharge of its labor of love in the patience of the blessed hope.

It will fall one of these days as it fell upon Noah and as it fell upon Sodom. Jesus himself says: "And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. After the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him

not go down to take them away; and let him that is in the field likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I say unto you, in that night there shall be two men on one bed; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left. There shall be two women grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left. And they answering say unto Him, Where, Lord? And He said unto them, Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together." Luke 17: 26-37.

Also in John 5 : 28 our Lord warned us: "Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

The Spirit warns of the same fact in Daniel 12 : 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." There remains for the impenitent and unsaved only a fearful-looking forward to judgment.

THE EXPECTATION OF THE SAINTS

What a difference for the Christian! All our humiliations and limitations will end when Jesus comes again. What a significant statement is made in Philippians 3 : 20. The heart

of this epistle is there: "Our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." That is a perfectly familiar picture. It is easy for us in this day to picture citizens in a conquered territory, under the yoke of oppressive bondage, yearning for deliverance from their oppressors and for reunion to the fatherland from which they had been divorced by the fortunes of previous wars. Under the heel of the oppressor they have been required to conform to the customs, laws, even the language of the land under whose government they are forced to live. Take for illustration the experience of Alsace-Lorraine, waiting for deliverance, hailing with acclamations of joy the troops of the allies constituting the army of occupation, every village going forth to meet the conquerors as they came in. There was ringing of bells, there were shouts of joy, there were tears and prayers of praise. Old men and women flung their arms about the necks of the soldiers on the day that the armistice was signed and deliverance was assured, and kissed them with all the simple ecstasy of children in the spell of an overflowing joy.

Under a principle of self-determination of peoples they had a right to choose their social

and national affiliations in this world, and their hearts had already availed themselves of this right.

Under that same principle some of us know under whose spiritual rule we would live. We long for the hour to strike when the Son of God shall come forth to destroy the devil and all his works—sin, disease, death, the grave, the last enemy to be put under His feet and destroyed; all the things that hurt and hinder, that disappoint and destroy the child of God—like a hideous yoke of bondage are to be lifted forever out of their experience! At His coming we are to be delivered from strife and anxiety and fear, from failure and disappointment, from all the experiences that bring heaviness to the heart, tears to the eyes, sorrow to the soul and questionings to the mind!

Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ commits us to this program of liberation and of joy in that liberation. Today our hearts are heavy as we wait for Him to appear and do this for us. The world ever grows worse. Its culture is carnal; its sins are fiendish and fleshly; its pride arrogant; its philosophy materialistic and rationalistic; its religion formal. The god of this world seems to be triumphing everywhere. The love of Christ waxes cold in many hearts. The world is indifferent to Him. His people pass Him by as if He meant nothing to them. The Saviour is still presented to the world as a suffering

Saviour; nowhere is there evidence of betterment. Our very schools and colleges and theological seminaries, all of which should be citadels of truth, are busy upon the denial and undermining of the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. Let it be repeated, the church is committed to that program which promises the destruction of all this triumphant power and activity of the devil. It may not be done before, *but when He comes again, then deliverance!*

NEUTRALITY IS IMPOSSIBLE

The church has ceased from her separation. Instead of a bride prepared for her husband, whose attitude is one of expectancy and anticipation, who has separated her heart from all other lovers and waits now in the impatience of readiness for the coming of the Beloved, the church has fallen into an attitude of fellowship with the world. Her very watchword of life seems to be conformity to the world. She has taken the world into her heart. What a difference may be made by one little word. Our Lord Jesus has laid the world *upon* the heart of the church, and the church has come to translate the preposition *upon* as *into*, and now, instead of taking the world *upon* its heart, seeking to win it back to God, taking its cares, its sorrows, its sins, its folly for Christ, it has taken the world *into its heart*, thus turning itself even into a very enemy of her Lord.

Separation is imperative! The church must correct its manner of life or die. That is the meaning of this urgent and earnest prayer: May the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, separate you as a wife is wholly separated unto her husband! Receive Christ as Lord as well as Saviour. Any true conception of Christian life reveals the fact that every step of Christian experience separates the Christian from the world. Cleansed by the blood, the Christian is separated from the world which remains in its sins. Changed by the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus, the Christian is distinguished from that mass of humanity who move on in utter unconsciousness of the miracle of regeneration. Sanctified by His indwelling, the saints of God are His peculiar possession, a separate and peculiar people.

A SEPARATED PEOPLE

We are a separated people! We must be separated from the world without removal from it. That is, we must not be of the world, though we still be in it. There will come a time when we shall be separated from the world. *At the end of this age when He comes again that separation will occur.* Consider the parables of Matthew 13. Many times is this separation foretold. The parable of the tares: "Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather up first the tares and bind

them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barns." In explanation of this our Master himself interpreted the parable as: "Therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the consummation of the age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The parable of the net: "So shall it be in the consummation of the age. The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from the righteous and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."

But now, while we wait, we have two necessary attitudes. First, "save yourselves from this crooked generation." We are sometimes told that that is a selfish motive. Two answers might be given. The scriptures exhort us to do this very thing. It is also a profoundly sane and sober thing to do. What man would hesitate to save himself from any danger jeopardizing his very life because others, equally warned with himself, refused to save themselves?

A second attitude is to make a living protest of testimony to the unsaved world. *This life is not the end of things.* The interests of this life

are not the permanent nor most vital interests. The shoreline of time only touches the infinite ocean of eternity. What we see is simply the visible elements of the infinite which our eyes never range. Time is one short hour in the eternity of years.

In earlier days, the motto upon the Spanish coat of arms was,, "Ne plus ultra," "nothing beyond." They had stood upon the coast lines and viewed the mighty ocean, limitless in mystery, terrible in distance, lying beyond. They had sailed its three-mile borders in their frail crafts and were convinced that their shoreline was the world's limit. But there came a man with faith. Columbus launched out into the deep with his three tiny ships. He sailed on with brave and courageous heart until he discovered another world beyond. When he came back and told his story, the Spaniards, because they believed him, knocked one word out of their motto, and it now reads: "Plus ultra," "More beyond."

So it is with the Christian. The unsaved world, looking out to the future, sees nothing of the heavenly life with its heavenly experience, with its infinite possibilities and activities and promises, and he writes across the horizon of his experience, "Nothing beyond." But we, whose eyes have been opened to see by faith the vision of our Lord, whose hearts have been made responsive to the promise He has so many times repeated that He is coming again to receive us unto Him-

self, so that we shall be with Him throughout the endless eternity, we write, "More beyond."

In the face of this faith, the prayer for the entire sanctification of the saints is the reasonable and legitimate prayer. To the task of separation from this world all the faculties of our souls must be brought—the mind, the soul and the body. The mind must be sanctified, preserved blameless unto the day of the Lord. Its thoughts, its creeds, its memories its enmities, its bitternesses. The soul must be preserved entire and unblamable at this coming—its passions, its affiliations, its life relations and fellowships. So, also, the body, with its appetites, its constant temptations to indulgence in food, drink, sex, must be preserved entire. All its concerns, clothing, health, sanctity of body as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, must be brought into subjection to Him. The three-fold life, the mind, soul and body, must be preserved entire *at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ*. His coming is the inspiration underlying the purpose of preservation. His coming is the sustaining hope in the experience of such sanctification. His coming is the goal toward which we live and move through the days of our probation, here upon earth in the midst of life's various and varying experiences.

Recently a young aeronaut, a perfect master of his craft, fell from two hundred feet in the air to the earth and was killed. In meditating upon the causes of his fall, it became perfectly evident

that it was not a lack of a suitable machine, nor the lack of sufficient power. Rather, there was an inability for some reason to sustain himself in the native element of the plane which he drove. And because he was unable to sustain himself in the place and at the task to which his life was committed, he fell and died.

All the backslidings of Christians, all the disappointments of the people of God, in character and conduct, may be attributed to that same inability to sustain themselves in the realm and activities of grace. Why is it? May we not find the cause of that inability in the failure of a proper faith objective, in the surrender of the anticipation of the Lord's return as the personal, vital, eminent expectation of the individual Christian and of the Christian church? Hear the spirit in I John 2:28: "Now, my little children, abide in Him; that, if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, *and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.*" Again, in II Peter 3:10-11: "*The day of the Lord will come as a thief: in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God.*" Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instruct-

ing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." James 5:7-9: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Murmur not brethren one against another that ye be not judged; *behold the judge standeth before the door.*"

We are children of the day and of the light. We stand at the parting of the ways. *Our attitude to the second coming of the Lord will determine our real relation to Him in the present age.*

A miracle of separation transpires each morning when the day dawns. All the owls and bats and beasts of prey belonging to the night hurry to cover. Their eyes and their hearts are not trained to the light. The day has no appeal for them. But also at the coming of the day, the song birds break into song. They trill their joy, they tell of their gladness, they fill the earth with music. In my own sunny southland as a boy, it was my delight at the first breaking through of the dark curtain of night by the radiant beams of the coming sun, to hear the stir of the birds in the trees. Directly the first breaking forth of the mocking birds sending melody into all the world, and then the whole chorus of field and forest joined in, till every part of the heavenly

chorus had been completed, so glad were they that the sun had arisen.

So those whose hearts are filled with the day, whose souls are golden because of the promised rising of the sun of righteousness, whose eyes are gladdened by the coming of the light; that light that has not yet been upon land or sea, can be filled with songs of exaltation and joy and gladness unspeakable. He is coming again, and His coming will not only be the culmination of all our effort, but the reward of all our separation unto Him, if we be preserved entire and unblamable at His coming.

CHAPTER V

The Return and Service

CHAPTER V

THE RETURN AND SERVICE

The coming again of the Lord Jesus to the earth is to make a great separation between men, Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with the angels; and then shall He render to every man, according to his deeds." Matt. 24:40, "Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left." Acts 10:42, "And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead." Romans 2:16, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 5:10, "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

His coming will mean one thing to Christians and another to those who are not Christians. It will mean an unspeakable joy to the believer and an unspeakable sorrow to the unbeliever. It is to be that day of great separation of which He spoke in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, when he declared that at the last, the sheep shall go to the right and the goats to the left; the day in which everlasting blessedness shall come to the

saints and everlasting punishment and banishment for those who are not His own. His coming will attract unto Himself all those whose souls are in consonance with His spirit and leave all those who have in themselves no quality of His divine nature, with which to respond to His Presence.

One of the familiar scenes of my boyhood was what we used to call the sun taking up water. Yonder in the western sky, in the late afternoon, especially if there had been a long drought, great fingers of clouds seemed to stretch from the earth to the clear sun, and the children said: "The sun is drawing up water." There was a great deal of water that had not been drawn up, a great deal of moisture that had not been taken, but all the moisture that had responded fully to the drawing of the sun, had formed a streaming cloud from earth to heaven, till the water and sun met in their appointed places. The result was water taken up in clouds. We saw it because, while the water was taken up by the sun, the sun came upon, or was made visible in the water. So it shall be that the Lord Jesus will come *upon the clouds* and He shall come *with the clouds*.

To give a correct translation of I Thessalonians 4:17, is to say that we shall be caught up in clouds. Thus you have the very picture of the saints going up to Him in clouds, and He is coming down to meet the saints upon the clouds. The believers in Christ, all those who look for his appearance shall be taken thus.

Yet all unbelievers shall be left. That is the greatest disaster possible. Some of you will be left on the earth when the saints are caught up. How great a sensation that catching up will make! For those who are caught up, there will be a great searching, as there was made for the Prophet Elijah when he was translated. Perhaps, for a few days the papers will make a great sensation of the disappearance of the saints. But the multitudes will go back to their business. A few broken-hearted ones, with grief unspeakable, will know the truth, and a sadness will for them fall on the earth. Knowing that their loved ones have been taken, but that they themselves have been left, left, left! Do you not remember how even the Master Himself sought to impress this great and terrible lesson upon us in the story of the ten virgins, five that were wise and five that were foolish. They that were wise, took their lamps filled with oil. The five that were foolish took no oil with them. And when the bridegroom came, they that were wise went in with him to the feast, and they that were foolish were left out. The whole picture of the Master's second coming is set forth there. He will come again for His bride and with His bride He will enter into His heavenly home. Then they who are ready will go in with Him. But those who are not ready shall be left. He will answer men then as they persistently knock at the door: "Depart, for I never knew you." Jesus, the bridegroom, as John calls Him, coming down out of His

house in the clouds and going back into His house in heaven, will leave outside in the cold and chilly darkness of this earth, without the gospel of grace, and without the testimony of the living Son of God, and without a single divine prompting, those who have rejected Him.

He tells us this story again in the parables of the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, the parable of the tares: "At the last there shall be a great separation. The good wheat shall be gathered together and put into barns and the tares shall be burned with fire." The parable of the fish: "The good fish shall be caught up and the foul shall be left and cast away." It is to be a day of terrible separation. I cannot understand how any human being who knows and loves Jesus Christ and looks for His second coming, can look upon his fellow-men without a tremendous heartbreak, lest they should be left. My son may be left! My business partner may be left! My friend left! My wife left! Never again through all eternity to hear the note of praise, never again to hear the loving invitation, never again to feel the wooings of the Holy Spirit—left! Surely this shall be the outer darkness, the condition and place of weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The coming of Jesus Christ will be a judgment to the unbeliever in that he has disregarded the gospel invitation and despised the cross of Christ, resisted the Holy Spirit and rejected the Christ of God Himself. This will be the end of

there is between the saved man and the unsaved man. The saved man has a great hope—though life opportunity for all who, having heard the gospel of the grace of God, have rejected it. There will be a judgment of the believer at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. But in no sense will it be the judgment of condemnation unto death. The judgment that comes with His return will, for the believer, be a judgment of His works, of His service. I hold it a truth against all possible question that the believer in Christ is, as regards eternal life, secure for all eternity. All the demons in hell, all the forces of evil in the world, combined, cannot shake the security of a single sinner who has come for refuge to Jesus Christ. Having passed out of death into life, through faith in Christ, the sinner is in Him alive forevermore. No man can pluck us out of His hand. He is greater than all. We are saved, not by any merit of our own, but by His grace. It is the gift of God. All the moral character, good conduct and ethical culture possible in life does not help in our salvation. The very Son of God who hung on the cross, became sin, died the death for us and so provided our perfect salvation freely. "By grace are you saved, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

If you have been saved once, you are saved through all eternity. Only it must be borne in mind that any real salvation of soul will produce a saved life as well, Lot, poor, sinful, unworthy, worldly Lot, was snatched from Sodom

and saved. The vilest sinner under heaven, once washed of his sin, can never be a lost soul. Saved, but judged by his works and the service he rendered, at the coming of the Lord Jesus. However vile the sinner may be the judgment of his sin is completed in the cross of Christ. Murderers, harlots, perjurers, gamblers, drunkards, thieves, adulterers, self-abusers, proud, haughty, frivolous, worldly, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, covenant breakers, liars, men of every imaginable uncleanness of life, with corrupt natures, with foul minds and impure hearts may find full forgiveness, perfect cleansing and perfect salvation in the cross. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses from all sin all who come unto God in confession and faith. Give the sinner repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the condemnation of sin and death passes at once and forever from him. Whatever of judgment remains for such an one can only be the judgment of the saint for the service rendered his Saviour. Unspeakable loss and sorrow may come to him at the coming of the Lord, if he must meet Him empty-handed. If the coming of the Lord shall find us barren of testimony, so that we bring no other soul to greet Him in faith, where is the confidence with which we shall greet Him at His appearing?

Many a man who has lived a Christian in the home with Christless companions, a Christian in business with Christless business companions, a

member of clubs of Godless friends, will at the throne of God rejoice in being saved, but will be robbed of his joy in being saved *alone*. He can bring his friends with him only upon terms of their personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That faith may be induced by the testimony of a believer.

The Word of God speaks with clear and wondrous tones: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ. But if any man build on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, each man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, but he himself shall be saved, even as by fire." *Think of it.*

He is coming to judge the church according to its works. The Apostle Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth said: "For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," meaning every man shall appear at the coming of the Son of man to give answer for the deeds done in the body. But if I am to be judged as a Christian when the Lord comes, for what shall I be judged? That judgment will be concerning my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a day in which men are saying that it does not matter what you believe; a day in which the teachings of Jesus Christ are not exalted in the earth; a day in which Jesus is rejected; a day when ethical culture is substituted for vicarious atonement. Now He is disrobed of His deity, sneered at con-

cerning His promise of return. Men no longer believe that He really exerts any spiritual power in the regeneration and transformation of human life. He is as thoroughly discredited and rejected by modern unbelievers as ever He was by the followers of Caiaphas and Pilate.

But it is a question of eternal moment to the church and the Christian as to what they believe about Jesus Christ. In that marvelous parable of Luke 18 in which He speaks to the end that men ought always to pray and not to faint, he speaks a word for this very day, "When the Son of man comes, shall He find the faith on the earth?"—not faith, but *the* faith, the faith which puts the Son of God on the throne and makes Him King and Ruler in the life. God will avenge His elect at the coming of the Lord Jesus. But who believes it? That is a question for schools and colleges, for college professors and students, for the members of the boards of trustees of our educational institutions that, bearing the Christian name, yet deny the faith of Christ. I wish to repeat with great deliberation, that *the faith* in the earth is a question for the judgment seat of Christ when He comes again. This is a day when too frequently the teacher of science thinks he must undermine the Christian faith, to make it as a myth in the hearts of his students. We hail with joy the rising tide of protest against it in many pulpits. We have need to reaffirm our faith in the integrity and inspiration of the Bible

as God's Word, to contend earnestly for the integrity of the Son of God and of the gospel we preach. Members of boards of trustees of colleges cannot sit idly by and think it of no concern. It is a principle of unbelief, a question whether the faith once for all delivered to the saints shall prevail or a new modernism of unbelief be substituted for it in the name of faith. Jude warned of it when he wrote, "I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

It is a question for preachers. There are an appalling number of preachers in our pulpits who deny the deity of Christ, disbelieve the physical resurrection and repudiate the plenary inspiration of the Bible. Whither do we drift? Are we so near the shoals of a shallow infidelity? Can the church hope to steer a safe course between the Scylla of doubt in the pulpit and the Charibdis of materialism in the world? It is a question for churches, a question for individuals, a question for you. There is no place on the globe where a child of God can sit idly by in the presence of that modernism which proclaims the theory that all religions are good, that men have one common goal, one common destiny.

Turn back the pages of the Book to the first three chapters of Revelation. Seven times therein the Lord indites a personal message to the church, seven times He warns them: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

That is the solemn message of Him who walks among the candlesticks. He gives His approval in every instance where the church refuses fellowship to false teachers. The Nicolaitans are condemned by the church and her Lord. The Lord approves that condemnation of the church at Ephesus. The church at Pergamum is approved and encouraged because, "Thou holdest fast my name and didst not deny my faith"; "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, so hath you also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. Repent, therefore, or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth." To the church at Thyatira, he writes: "But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, and she teacheth and seduceth my servants." To the church at Sardis: "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." To the church in Philadelphia: "Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth."

The son of God expressly declares, therefore, that at His coming He will hold us responsible for the false teachings we have permitted, and for the false teachers we have countenanced. This is

the day in which the church of Christ needs immediately and imperatively to purge itself of false creeds and to shut its doors in the face of those who bring false teachings into it. Not only will He judge us concerning our faith, but He will judge us concerning our testimony. The Christian faith depends for its existence upon being told. Do you realize that the very word "gospel" means "good news"? Now good news is circulated by being told. Take a concordance and see how many times in one phrase or another he says: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." The great commission itself contains three commands, make disciples, baptize, teach obedience, everyone of the three depends upon vocal expression of faith on the part of believers. Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The care of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, the pursuit of pleasure, have gained such an entrance into our hearts and so strangles our souls that our lips are sealed concerning our salvation and the author thereof. For this God will hold us to judgment when He comes. It is so easy to bear a testimony if one has a testimony to bear. A simple-hearted workman had a profane boss. He could not openly rebuke his superior for his profanity. But after some days the boss observed that each time he swore the humble workman lifted his hat from

his head. Finally he demanded the reason for this. Then the workman had his chance and used it. Said he, "You dishonor a Name I love, so each time you profane that Name, I honor it, and at the same time pray for your salvation, so that you may no longer dishonor Him." Such a rebuke and testimony could not but bear fruit, as it did.

If you have lost your testimony for Christ in your family circle, among your friends, with your business associates, return now from your backslidings. If you have had no soul-winning passion, or if the flame which once burned has now become only an ember among the ashes of your burned-out enthusiasms, return from your backslidings. Search your heart, pray, as the penitent Psalmist prayed: "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit; then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." The only reason for lips silent, upon the theme of redemption, is an unbelieving or a backslidden heart. Pray that the palimpsests of your soul may be restored, so that the original writings of faith, love and steadfastness may be re-read in your life.

The heart cold toward the Lord is the costliest possession any saint ever held. The backslidden state is permitted in any life at too great a price. It is not enough for a child of God to approve righteousness, he must, like Job, be a perfect and upright man, one that fears God and

turns away from evil. He must obey the divine injunction through Isaiah: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

No Christian can ever satisfy God or make secure his own state of grace, by a passive life. God is ever calling His people to offensive, spiritual warfare. The Christian who is on the defensive has lost his testimony and is living a defeated life. The loss of testimony always entails the loss of other things most precious. Lot, who pitched his tent toward Sodom, afterwards came to live in Sodom. Though he vexed his soul at the Sodom manner of living, yet in Sodom, lost his testimony. The loss of his testimony cost him his wife, his children, his friends, his integrity, his property. He was plucked out of the fire solely because he came under the covenant security of that blood which saves. Be warned lest an evil heart of unbelief make you ashamed to give testimony concerning the name of the Son of God, who claims even now to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

CHAPTER VI

The Return and Resurrection

CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN AND RESURRECTION

I. COR. 15:53

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.”

The greatest tragedy of the eternities, the most terrible experience of time, universal history has written in one fearful sentence: “Sin entered the world and death through sin.” No words comparable in sorrow to these have ever been written. The whole history of man in his struggle, in his conflict, in his failure, in his ever-recurring disappointments is told in this tragic statement: “Sin entered the world and death through sin.”

Milton, opening his immortal poem, “Paradise Lost,” wrote:

“Of Man’s first disobedience
And the fruit of that forbidden tree
Whose mortal taste brought death into the world
With all our woe.”

Sin entered and death through sin. Another statement of this God-attested fact is that from Adam to Moses, death reigned. One finds no other thing, perhaps, of such possible interest, as to

take the long pages of history and read them backwards. Read them in the records of inspiration, read them upon the pages of profane writings. Through all the achievements and undertakings, the greatness of men, the love and triumph, the failures, death is the finish written to every single life. When Jesus Christ was every single life-death. When Jesus Christ was upon this earth, six hundred million human beings walked its weary way with Him. Fifty years after, they had all gone down to their graves. And that generation was succeeded by another and yet another and another. As each had been preceded by other generations of men, each one has gone down to corruption in the grave. Today, one billion eight hundred million human beings walk the earth and look up to the sunlight of God. Within a single short century every son of them and every daughter of them will be rotting in the grave to which the body must return, corrupted and corruptible, unless He who is to come shall come and put an end once for all to the reign of death.

Turn back the pages of this book and look over the inspired list of those, who, great and small, have stood out conspicuously in the service of God and man. There is Abel, with face like the morning, eye clear as light, with heart untainted by sin, with no single trace of evil upon him revealing the curse of sin, just fresh from the presence of God. I read that page for one moment and

am smitten with the horror of it, for *Abel died*.

Following Abel, conspicuous upon the pages of the earliest human history stands Noah, the matchless man, whose name is the synonym of strength and purity and faithfulness, of unvarying testimony of faith in God and obedience to Him. He endured the scoffs and jibes of his generation. One hundred and twenty years he bore audible testimony to the impending wrath of God, warning his generation. His is a marvelous story of trust and divine protection—but *Noah died*.

Abraham, standing like some mountain peak above the lesser ranges of low-lying hills in that far off day, the friend of God, the father of the faithful, worthy to live in the memory of man and upon the pages of history through all succeeding generations, challenges the world's attention. Yet *Abraham died*.

Also Sarah, a princess, the beautiful woman of her day, the mother of the promised seed, *died*. And Rachael, incarnation of love and romance, of tenderness and beauty, waited and worked for for fourteen years by him, who, following in the succession of faith and separation unto God, counted her worthy to be waited for all this weary while, finds a niche in God's hall of fame. Yet *Rachael died* and was buried under a terebinth tree in Syria.

Joseph, steadfast in faith and purpose, pure in life even in a strange land, second upon the

throne of power in ancient Egypt, great and good, a glorious type of the Saviour, conspicuous even among the great men of his day and generation, lives a pattern to youth in all its temptations and struggles all these centuries since. But *Joseph died*.

Moses, leader, law maker, nation builder, seeing God face to face, giving ideals and standards to the world through all ages, *died*.

Samuel, the greatest of the prophets, inspirer and patron of music and poetry, organizer of worship, inspiration of that school of the prophets out of which was born the marvelous litany of the Psalms, *died*.

Ruth the Moabitess, heart flaming with love and soul true as steel in its allegiance of affection, saying to the bereaved Naomi words which have been the expression of undying affection and devotion in every century since, "Whither thou goest, I will go; where thou dwellest, I will dwell; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God; and where thou diest, I will die and there will I be buried." Ah, the bitterness of it, *Ruth died*.

Then came David, king to whom God spoke of a house and kingdom and a throne to which there should be no end—a perfect man after God's own heart, save in one conspicuous sin. But *David died*.

And Solomon, the wisest of the wise, who set his heart to know wisdom and to discern righteousness, who was able to command all the resources of his age to add luster to his name and

greatness to his reputation, Solomon came at last to cry: "*Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. There is nothing but the grave before me.*" Read the 1st chapter of Ecclesiastes in which Solomon relates his own experience. He says what men are saying in this day, that regeneration means nothing else than pro-creation, that eternal life is simply the continuous life of the race as one generation succeeds another.

With the monotony of materialism crushing him, he cries out: "One generation goeth, and another cometh; but the earth abideth forever. The sun also riseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to its place where it ariseth. The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north; it turneth about continually in its course, and the wind returneth again to its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whither the rivers go, thither they go again." An ever-recurring experience of monotony! Life is full of disappointments. And then he said: "What is the use of going on? I will get me pleasure. I will make my heart glad with wine and with women and with self-indulgence. I will build great houses and plant great vineyards and gardens and parks, and I will gather into them singing men and singing women, and open my heart to take the whole world in. Ashes upon the lips and ashes upon the soul, there is nothing worth living for." And then Solomon says in the most remarkable state-

ment concerning the nature of man in the whole Old Testament, in the 3rd chapter of Ecclesiastes: "Thou hast written eternity in their souls." Man may know that—

“* * * * the grave is not his goal;
Dust thou are to dust returneth,
Was not spoken of the soul.”

Yet there was nothing to do but to die. How many multitudes have gone down to their graves? How many, many have felt the bitterness of failure and the emptiness of all final values in the endless struggle—the endless effort at achievement—only those who know and love the Lord, who believe that He lives and will return, have found the key to this mystery of life. I Cor. 15:58, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord."

God gives us the revelation. He requires of man purity of heart, cleanness of life; his whole heart must be cleansed of sin; the devil, the god of this world, must be rebuked. Man must put himself on God's side against his own sin; he must set himself against the forces of evil in the world; he must live and love and labor until He redeems the world by bringing it back to the Son of God; he must thrust himself into its conflict and face the terrific opposition about him, fighting on for righteousness, even when he seems to go down in defeat and failure.

But that means self-denial and self discipline, and to what end? Cursing his own failure of purpose and effort, man finds only failures, questionings and disappointment everywhere. At last he says: "What is the use? If I am to live and die and there is nothing before me but the grave, why live a holy life, why keep myself clean, why not give reign to the appetites that cry out for liberty and license, why not eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow I may die?" With them all Job for tomorrow I may die?" With them all, Job voices this anxiety when he cries to God, "If a man die, is that the end? If a man die, shall he live again?"

And God speaks to him, I know not with what gentle whispers, I know not by what compelling voice—but Job hears with a glad heart and leaps to his feet, shakes away the despair from his soul and cries with a great joy in his heart: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin, even this body has been destroyed, then without my flesh will I see God, whom I, even I, shall see on my side, and mine eyes shall behold him not as a stranger." Triumph over death, victory over despair, courage to face life, to endure its struggles and meet the outrageous pangs of its outrageous fortunes, lie in that assurance.

I pass on from Job for I am not fully satisfied with his answer. It voices only a new born fact—discloses only a partial revelation. He

said: "Without my flesh shall I see God." He meant, without *this* flesh, for this flesh is to be changed, exalted and glorified. The whole idea of resurrection loses point if it miss the fact of its physical character. This involves an identity of substance, though not necessarily a similarity of appearance.

Come to a further revelation and hear Isaiah saying with a voice as clear and distinct as the ringing of a bell: Isaiah 26:19. "Thy dead shall live, *my dead bodies shall arise*. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of the herbs and the earth shall cast forth the dead; Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be over past. For *Jehovah cometh forth out of his place* to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Jehovah of the Old Testament, who is the Jesus of the New Testament, shall come forth from His place in the heavens for His bride, and He will catch her up into his inner chambers, to await there during the period of the great indignation, the great tribulation, and then she will come forth with Him as He comes to punish the nations for their iniquity. His saints shall live and reign with Him for a thousand years.

Daniel 12 : 1-2—"At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince, who standeth for the children of thy people and there shall be a time

of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered; every one that shall be found written in the book—and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. In that last day Job speaks of “My Redeemer.” Daniel reveals the great Prince, Isaiah—Jehovah, and all tell in the unbroken testimony of the Old Testament that all hope men have of the resurrection centers in the coming again of this Redeemer, Jehovah, Prince Messiah.

Come to the New Testament. What is the mission of Him who stands out as the supreme revelation, the divine presence of that New Testament page. Hear Him: The Son of Man is come to destroy the works of the devil. The Holy Spirit reiterates that statement. There are people who say there is no devil. “Devil” is only a misspelled word, from which the “d” must be deleted; that it is only e-v-i-l. If you have done away with the “d,” upon the same authority you can do away with the “e,” and so one by one you can destroy all the letters until there is even no evil left in the world—by the same process of mortal error of mind which does not really exist.

I know that Jesus Christ is moved with indignation against the works of the devil. *He will come* to destroy them all and reveal the kingdom of

God in the earth. So He taught men to pray: "Thy kingdom come, *thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

I am not looking for an immediate residence in heaven. I expect to live there only a little time and then I am coming back down with Him to live in a redeemed earth and rule here with Him in the earth. I would regret to believe that I would have to spend my thousand years in heaven. The reward of the saints is to have the privilege of coming back with Jesus to reign here over the nations with Him.

He came to destroy the works of the devil. Satan's great work is death. "Sin entered in and death through sin." When I look for my Master and anticipate the day when His hand shall be in authority upon the reins of government in this world, I look for the day when He shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. The last enemy is death. He tells us that death will be seized and robbed of its sting and broken of its power.

The apostle Paul writes—he might even have preached it upon the streets in this city, where we have open gates to every false creed of humanitarianism, as beautiful as they are false, as wonderful as they are destructive: "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable." If this life with its powers and possibilities be the only real life, and if men give their time in doing all the good they can do

and in getting all the good they can get, if they make man better, give him a better world in which to live, a better environment, a better life, better comforts all about him and leave him the same unregenerate man that he was, to go down under the wrath of God to the corruption of the grave, it is a small business on which they are engaged and a fearful delusion to which they have tied their hopes. If in this world only we have hoped in Christ, if the grave is the only goal, then we are indeed of all men most pitiable.

Jesus Christ gives the final answer to our problem. Revelation 1:18, "I am He that was dead, but I am alive forevermore, and I hold in my hands the keys of death and of hades." I wondered what He meant—"I hold in my hands the keys of the gate of death and of hades." I go back to that statement about which there has been much controversy: "Upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." What did He mean? Some teach that the rock is the confession which Peter made; that the rock is the church, which must go forth as a great army against the hosts of evil and destroy them; that the church shall overcome the evil and win the world for Christ. Nothing of that is in the word the Master spoke. The gates of hades shall not prevail against His church. Up to the time that Jesus Christ was on this earth and died on the cross and came up out of the grave, every mortal being, dying, had gone

down to hades—the prison house of the dead—whose two compartments, separated by a great fixed gulf, held not alone the spirits of the wicked but also of the righteous dead.

Lazarus lay in Abraham's bosom on one side of the great chasm, and Dives on the other side could talk across to him. It was not the width, but the depth, which made the great and final separation. Jesus said: "I died and rose again—and I hold in my hand the keys of hades." Do you remember when He rose from the dead that many of the saints were also raised and appeared in Jerusalem. This is an illustration of the final great day of the resurrection of the Christian dead. From that day until this and until the day when He shall come again, the spirit of the departed dead who die in Christ do not go down, they go up. They do not go to hades, they go to paradise and are delivered from prison. There will come a day when the Lord of life will break through the clouds for His saints and gather the bodies of the Christian dead out of the graves, translating the living saints, and will gather them together with Him in the air.

You ask what I mean by the resurrection. I want to make it as simple and as plain as it is possible to make it. I do not speak of the resurrection as an idea. That futility of philosophy which declares the resurrection as such, means nothing to me. What is the resurrection of the dead? If language means anything, then

the Word of God is not simply a will-of-the-wisp over miasmatic bogs of thought. The resurrection of the dead taught in this book means the coming up out of the grave of the bodies that were planted there. This *corruptible* must put on *incorruption*, this *mortal* must put on *immortality*. The very bodies that we put in the grave will come up out of the grave. I want to illustrate, if I may, this whole resurrection business. One of the most interesting experiences of my whole life as a lad, was that of every August when it was my business to gather the grapes from the vineyards—rich, luscious, fragrant, delicious. I gathered them by the bushel, by the barrel full. Then they were crushed in the press. Then the juice-blood of the grapes was permitted to die. For fermentation is death. But before it died saccharine was injected into it. Thus the very process of death became a process of life. It died as grape juice, it arose as sweet wine. It was the same substance—a different quality, purged of its element of corruption, now emerging out of death—it was forever beyond the power of death. The very same body of grape juice, different in quality, different in character, emerged out of death into deathless life, for the juice having died in fermentation dies no more. Thus the dead bodies of the sleeping ones will be, by the very processes of death, *at the coming of the Lord Jesus, changed* forevermore and pass thus beyond the power of death. This is the promise of Christ.

Regeneration is the earnest and guarantee of immortality. The Holy Spirit in the believer makes the body of the believer a holy thing. Like the saccharine in the grape juice, His entrance into the life of the believer plants in his body the germ of immortality. From then on it is impossible for death to hold the believer.

Yesterday when I stood by an open grave it was the only thing I had to give those to whom I was speaking, as in the days before when I tried to comfort those who were in grief and sorrow. This was my only word: "They shall live again. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ we are of all men most pitiable." But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Christ must put all rule and authority and power under foot and then shall He deliver up the kingdom to the Father. The last enemy to be put under foot is death. But Christ shall conquer death.

God is the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. He is the God of the living, not the God of the dead. Our God guarantees our resurrection. To us all, as to Martha, the Master gives comfort and immortal hope in saying, "I am the resurrection and the life." And again, "Because I live you shall live also."

Take this statement, Romans 8 : 11: "But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ

Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you." When the Holy Spirit of the living God came into this body and glorified it, He sowed in it the seeds of immortality, and the grave could no more hold my body than it held the body of the incorruptible Christ. Herein God has said a great word to us with which to challenge the infidelity of the age.

There is no word here for the man who is not a Christian. His body shall rot in the grave. One thousand years later in stern judgment he shall be raised up to a second death and go out a wandering spirit, banished forever from the face of our God. This is the second death.

CHAPTER VII

The Return of Christ and Sinners

CHAPTER VII

THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND SINNERS

There are a great many passages throughout the Bible that indicate a distinct and definite separation between the righteous and the sinful. That separation is of such a character that it behooves it to have a great climax. The coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ is an event that has a remarkable effect throughout the entire revelation of God. It is cast about with wondrous lights. It is also overshadowed with awful shadows. The revelation of that event and of Him who is to be the central figure in it has a marvelous setting in the fourth chapter of Revelation, where His throne is described as having "One seated upon the throne who was like a jasper and a sardine stone." And there was a rainbow round about the throne, so resplendent in its light that it had the appearance of an emerald. The significance of the jasper stone and the sardius is that these two stones were set in the breast-plate of judgment which the High Priest wore. So He who sits on the throne of judgment at the last is to sit there as the priest made king. The glory about Him is ineffable—splendor unspeakable, and this is typical of the glory and joy which belong to the believer in Him—at His appearing.

This glory and joy of the divine reward are anticipated for the believer in Christ throughout the length of his life of faith in the earth. It is the joy of the bride suddenly made aware that her espoused husband has come. The consummation of her hopes, the realization of her affections, the consummation of her desires are all in him. It is the conception of that perfect joy which belongs to the bride and the bridegroom in union itself. The significance of this joy is even greater; if there be a greater joy than that it is the joy of the slave suddenly come into the presence of his deliverer, who has come with a mighty army and a divine authority to break his bonds asunder and to give him his perfect freedom; to put him on his feet with a moral liberty as well as a physical liberty; to make him a new man in a new environment. It is the joy of the earth in the moment when the first glorious certainty of spring is revealed, when all the teeming folks of the earth awake; when every bulb and seed responds to the call of warmth in the air; when the birds have returned from the southland and have perched themselves on every tree to sing their songs and carol their note of love and life. The winter has passed, the snow has gone; desolation has melted from the face of the barren earth, and there is the gladness of eternal springtime upon the earth.

It is so with the believer. In anticipation of Christ's coming he looks forward longingly to it.

His present experience may be to him one of great disappointment, of desolation even. It may be that now he is only realizing the failure of many hopes, but he knows that when He appears all this shall have passed and the weeping which shall have endured for the night shall give place to the eternal joys of the morning.

But the wicked are not so. The coming again of the Lord Jesus to this earth will mean to the sinner that terror which belongs to the rebel at the coming of the King, whose trust he has betrayed, whose dignity he has insulted, whose government he has refused, whose flag he has trampled upon with unholy feet, whose person he has scorned with great hatred. It will be the terror of the criminal, not in the presence of his judge, but in the presence of his executioner, hands dripping with blood, brain seething with rebellion against authority, conscious of the just judgment now upon him for his sins. It will be the terror of the wife in the presence of the unexpected husband whose love she has betrayed, whose honor and name she besmirched with shameless shame.

God burn into your hearts the fact that the revelation of Jesus Christ is to be the consummation of a great separation between those men and women who love him and those who do not. The greatest tragedy of this present generation, the most pitiable fact in all the reach of Christian experience, lies in the understanding of that dif-

ference which is between the men who love Him and the men who love Him not. That difference is as high as heaven, as deep as hell, as far reaching as the possible range of human experience. An eternal significance lies in the fact that there is a difference as vital as life itself and as certain as death between the saved man and the unsaved man. There are in the average American city of one hundred and fifty thousand population not fewer than one hundred and twenty-five thousand human beings who are without God; not fewer than one hundred and twenty-five thousand souls who are on the swift and certain wake of hell; not fewer than one hundred and twenty-five thousand beings who are serving the devil, refusing God His sovereignty in the life and in the world. The second chapter of Ephesians declares that all those who are without Christ have no hope in the world. Think of a hopeless existence, a hopeless outlook upon life, an unlimited journey of despair and darkness; for these lie as the ultimate goal of the life journey of every unsaved man who makes his meaningless way through the world.

A great separation! *There is the separation occasioned by a person.* Jesus Christ is thrust between them. They who stood around the tribunal of Pilate had the option of two choices, Barabbas or Jesus. Pilot said unto them, "Whom will you that I should release unto you, Barabbas or Jesus, who is called Christ." One the robber, the very incarnation of sin; the other, Jesus, the

holy Son of God. Already had the superscription been written: "King of the Jews," the sign of universal sovereignty. In His death He was thus declared King in the realm of culture and of law and of religion. But the rulers of the people led them in the cry: "Away with Jesus! Give us Barabbas! Crucify Jesus; relase Barabbas! Put Jesus on the cross; give Barabbas freedom and put him on the throne!"

Ah, that is the issue, and from that moment until this the issue between men who serve God and men who serve Him not is the issue of a divine person. One need have not a moment's hesitation in saying that the supreme issue in this world between men today is the issue of the person of Jesus Christ.

We may well give heed this day to the statement that the one hope of this world in its political and social turmoil is Jesus, the Son of God Himself. There is no other power that can cope with the temptations and dangers of life or can prove adequate to its problems. There is no plan that man has offered, no dream that man has dreamed, no vision that he has seen that will stand the test of human need in this or any age. Jesus Christ claims the right to hold in his hand the reins of universal government and authority. When He is received and given power He can bring forth peace in righteousness. That is the only permanent peace. When He is rejected there is only moral and social chaos, political disorder and crime.

Yes, those who love Him and those who love Him not stand upon two sides of a great separation. But the wicked and the righteous are not only separated by a Person, *they are also separated by a great principle.* There are three principles of human life government in the universe. There is the theocentric principle of government, the geocentric principle of government and egocentric principle of government—God-centered life, world-centered life and self-centered life. Self and the world are in darkness. They are enemies of God and of those who serve Him. The God-centered life is not the easy one. The great question in man's life is whether his life is God centered or centered elsewhere; whether the influences which control him are the divine influences; whether the forces to which he yields are the God-controlled forces. These are questions from which he cannot escape.

You know something of the issues involved in our great Civil War. Your people responded with heroic vision to the call of the Union and with great loyalty supported the flag of the Union and the principle of a united country. But you can hardly understand the intensity of that issue as some of us in the southland understood it when that issue was brought sharply into the midst of a family. Some for conscience sake must adhere to the Union and some by an inescapable conviction must adhere to the Confederacy. Differences, estrangements as keen in their anguish

as death itself, resulted. But there was no escape from that. Men must there stand or fall by the political principle to which they give adherence.

So we stand or fall in our relation to Christ; the principle of truth, the principle of conviction, the principle of loyalty and devotion to Him become the issues that separate men, the saved from the unsaved. There are some who stand with Him and for Him, and there are some who, consciously or unconsciously, have never yielded themselves to the mastery of His name, and these principles in the lives of men make an inescapable separation.

We have never understood the significance of Jesus Christ's Gospel in this world. It is hopeless folly for any man to teach or preach as the gospel of Christ a program of peace among men. Jesus said of Himself: "I came not to send peace, but a sword," and wherever the Gospel is preached in the world it has made contention and conflict. It has not made peace. No permanent peace can ever come in the world while there are spiritual and moral differences between men. Jesus came to redeem the world, and until He takes into His hands the reins of government and sits upon the throne of David, according to the promises of God, there can be no peace in this earth. The nations must come to Zion to learn righteousness and to Jehovah to obtain their laws before permanent peace can come.

There is also the separation of condition.

They who are in Christ are alive. They who are out of Christ are dead. Concerning one it is written that he is alive unto God forevermore, being delivered from sin. Concerning the other it is written that being dead to God he is alive unto sin. The difference between the two is as the difference between the daylight at noon and the darkness at midnight; it is as the difference between death and life—the one alive unto God and dead unto sin, the other alive unto sin and dead to God. The difference is the difference of the man who is tempted and of the man who has no temptation. For of the one it is written: "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ." Of the unsaved it is written: "They are condemned already because they believe not in Him." Concerning the saved it is written that since they live in Him it will be their will to do His will and to keep His commandments. Concerning sinners it is written that in their moral death they are children of their father, the devil, and that they desire to do his will in the earth.

This terrible separation of person, of principle and of condition finds its climax in the separation which death reveals. There is a literal hell—a place of torment unthinkable, where men are plunged into anguish of punishment beyond the power of man's mind to measure. Between the righteous and the unsaved there is a great gulf. On the one side Lazarus rests on Abraham's bosom, and on the other side the rich man rests

not at all, but caught in the living flames of torment unthinkable, cries out across the gulf for deliverance, for relief if not for release. Yes death comes and puts sinners into awful torture and banishment, since they have followed Him not. But for the saint having followed the Son of God here there is salvation and peace both here and hereafter.

General William Booth, of the Salvation Army, used to tell the story of a family in the city of London who occupied the upper floor of an apartment house in a certain section of the city known to the Salvation Army workers. The family was well known as avowed enemies of the Gospel, infidels concerning the faith. There were four members of the household—father, mother, son and daughter. So settled and positive was their antagonism to the Gospel of Christ that they had publicly declared their unwillingness to have a Christian enter their home, at any time, or for any purpose.

A young Salvation Army lassie, in great yearning pity for their condition of spiritual loss, determined to force her way, if possible, into the home and at least bear her testimony for the Lord Jesus. And so one day, climbing up the stair toward the apartment in which they lived, she came to the landing just below the open door of their apartment. As she paused for breath she heard the tones of a man in mature years, strong, firm, confident, saying: "Hold on, my son,

hold on. You are sick now. It may be you must even die. But we know there is nothing beyond. We have reasoned it all out. We have read all the books. We know all the arguments. We have exploded the Christian myth long ago. There is nothing but a step into the dark, and then sleep, peaceful and permanent. Do not be afraid. Hold on, hold on." Then there was a moment's silence, after which the sobbing voice of a woman cried in great and yearning tenderness: "Oh, my precious boy; mother's heart breaks for you, but you must not be afraid. You will be going to sleep directly as gently as ever you did when a babe upon mother's bosom. You remember that we investigated all the questions relating to any possible life beyond this. You know our faculties were all strong and vigorous when we reached the definite and deliberate conclusion that there is nothing beyond but darkness, and death is but a step into it and then sleep—hold on, hold on." Again that heart-breaking pause. With straining ears the Salvation Army lass waited, and then the voice, young and vigorous, of the sister was heard with the tender note of a great compassion, saying: "Oh, my brother, do not falter now. All real knowledge, conviction and understanding of life and death came to you in the days of health. Do you not remember the books we read, the arguments we heard and made, and the conclusion to which we came. Just hold on now for a little while and then all will be over and you will

sleep. There is nothing beyond. Just hold on." And then, wavering upon the air, a voice laden with great tragedy of despair, between choking gasps for breath, said: "That is all right. But, oh, there is nothing to hold to. There is nothing to hold to as I go out into the dark!" Nothing to hold to; nothing to hold to! In all God's universe, there is nothing to hold to, for the soul that has not learned the clasp of the hand of the strong Son of God. He only hath light and He only hath life and immortality. He is the resurrection and the life. Without Him there is no hope, no life, no immortality.

Oh, it is not likely that you will change at death. There is no moral quality in death—no chance of change beyond. I urge you to believe this. Within the past month a man said to me: "For forty-two years I have denied God with a hungry heart. Forty-two years I have kept Him away in unbelief. Forty-two years, with a fear of the future unspeakable—I cannot believe." Think you that forty-two years of making God a liar will be blotted out in a moment by the matter of death? I tell you again, there is no change at death—no moral change at death at all—and there is precious little possibility that any man will, in the presence of death, change his relation toward God. Some one interested in that sort of thing compiled an experience of two hundred deathbed converts. They supposed they were dying. They made profession of their faith in Christ and

ran for refuge in the hour of peril. But, recovering from sickness, their ways were unchanged, without a single flickering of the light of faith. There was only darkness in their souls. Only two out of the two hundred lived a changed life or gave evidence of having received Christ in reality. Yes, death makes a great separation, for the believer goes up to God and the unbeliever down to hell. The believer goes into light, the unbeliever into darkness and despair—joy to the one and suffering unthinkable to the other.

But, my friends, all the separation—the separation of person, the separation of principle, the separation by condition, the separation that is marked and made by death—will reach its climax in the separation made by and at the return of Christ. What a change His coming will make! There will be no change—no chance for the man after death. But there will be a great revelation when Christ shall be seated upon the judgment throne. He shall then reveal Himself not as Saviour, but as Judge. It is a personal matter. Have you made it a matter of personal interest for yourself?

This is the comfort for His saints: "Let not your heart be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you and will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Palaces for each of us upon streets of gold; white robed angels of glory; and the many wonders

which will grow out of seeing Him face to face.

On the other hand, His personal rule will be voiced for the sinner in this awful doom: "Depart from me for I never knew you!"

Is it a question of conduct? For the saint this will be the judgment: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these, My brethren, you have done it unto Me. Enter thou into the joy of your Lord." And unto the sinner this: "Inasmuch as you have done it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto Me. Depart into everlasting punishment."

Is it a question of condition? One shall be taken, the other left. The two at the mill will be separated, the two in the field will be separated; wings for the one, leaden feet of despair for the other; the upward flight of the soul into life for the one, the downward plunge of despair into death for the other.

Is it a question of destiny? These go away into eternal life; these into eternal punishment. Is it a question of Christ Himself? Then hear this now for your soul's sake: He is the Saviour now, with invitations to come to Him, with love and patience more than human tongue can tell. Rest your troubled and perplexed minds in Him. He will give you liberty; your soul freedom with environment and power to live up to the demands of a perfect Godliness. He has power over death, and these bodies touched by the divine hand shall become immortal. Is the salvation He offers not

the last necessity of your life? Is the cleansing of your sins, the purification of your soul, the empowering of your life for righteousness now of no interest to you? When He comes again He shall appear not as Saviour but as Judge. Your only hope of salvation is now.

I have read somewhere of a ship wrecked upon a desert island. Sufficient stores were rescued from the lost ship to last the survivors many months. The wreck had occurred in the spring. One man in the crowd urged an immediate conserving of food, an immediate planting of the soil against the possible coming of winter. But his warning went unheeded. There were stores enough now. The summer was long. Perhaps there would be no winter at all on this semi-tropical island. And so in pleasure and idleness and neglect they wandered the golden days through. No crops were planted. No houses were built. No plans were made for the days of need. Flippantly they quoted the proverb, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." But there came a day when realization seized upon them. Summer was gone, frost was in the air. The stores of food had vanished and there were no markets from which to buy. Then, indeed, there was great hurrying to and fro and many proposals to plant the soil with the remaining seed. But at last it dawned upon them that the summer and harvest time had passed and that the winter had come; that cold and famine was upon

them to exact their toll of death. So the last member of that ill-fated, ill-advised party went down to needless and foolish fate.

So the coming of Christ will reveal too late the significance of the question with which He challenges both the souls and judgments of men. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul," or "What can a man give in exchange for his life." The Master did not mean to state his question thus twice in slightly different form. The significance of that double question lies in this: "He who spends his life in gaining the world may gain the world, but in doing so his life is spent. So at last when he comes to realize that the world does not satisfy and he cannot keep that for which he has spent his life, *in consternation he finds that he cannot trade or buy back his life again to invest it more wisely.* The rich man enlarged his barns, increased his crops and congratulated his soul that he had much goods laid up in store for years to come so that he turned to take his ease with idle satisfaction. But God said to him: "Thou fool; this night shall thy soul be required of thee, and then whose shall all these things be?" The supreme tragedy of folly for any soul is in leaving Christ out of the life. No life is complete without Him. No life can be saved apart from Him.

I saw one summer day in a clover field a bee and a moth gathering honey from the pollen of the flowers. The bee, busy for hours, gathered

out of all the flowers the rich and luscious honey, till ladened with his burden, he arose and circling in the air caught his bearings. Called by the voice of his queen in some distant hive, he flew straight as an arrow to the homing place of his queen and himself, bringing his day's labors and the fruit of his love and devotion to lay at the feet of the queen, that under her direction it might be used again for the life of the colony.

The moth spent all his golden hours sipping the nectar of the flowers, gathering no burden, contributing no portion, hearing no voice, *having* no queen—to die at noontime and perish upon the very flowers and in the very field from which he had drawn sustenance of life; living to no purpose and dying with no promise.

So those who live and labor in Christ, upon whose soul the voice of the King falls ever and anon, a clear call to the heavenly home, may live and labor until at last when He calls the peremptory summons, "Come up hither"; will with life ladened with golden deeds, ascend on wings released by faith, to lay at His feet the treasure store of life's service. Those who know him not, like the foolish moth, sip from every field of pleasure; but have used that which only perished with the using, and learning no wisdom against the day of the Lord, having no King and hearing no voice, go down to their doom, perishing in the very world which has allured and held, while for a time only it sustains. The miserable end of a miserable hopelessness of unfaith.

PART II

WHAT THE RETURN OF THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST MEANS TO ISRAEL
AND THE NATIONS

CHAPTER I

The Return of Christ and the Nations

CHAPTER I.

THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND THE NATIONS

Two parallel lines of revelation appear in the Holy Scriptures. In them the will of God in relation to man is perfectly revealed—historically, experimentally and prophetically.

THE PERSONAL REVELATION

First there is a personal revelation to man as man. This revelation is individualistic in its character and in its purpose. It takes into account the whole tragedy of human sin, the futility and failure of all human effort at recovery and the plan of salvation as provided by God. The tragedy of sin is revealed primarily as an individual tragedy. One woman listened to the subtle voice of the serpent and obeyed the invitation of the cunningly disguised tempter. Following her misguided confidence and rebellious action the one man sinned. As the Scriptures declare, "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin." His was the unusual act, the unusual experience, revealing the uniform method by which, through the centuries, the race has one by one fallen away from God, partaking of that forbidden fruit "whose mortal taste brought death into the world with all our

woe." One by one the sons of men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The divine revelation takes account of that stupendous fall of man who learns no wisdom from the historic experience of so vast a multitude of those who fill the disappointing graves that mark the long, long path by which the whole family of man has progressed from the beginning till this hour.

The personal or individual revelation also indicates the three-fold method by which man has sought to recover from his fallen estate. First he discovered that a perfect environment did not lend him security. Even into Eden Satan found his way. By man apart from contact with his fellows, even while alone with God, the voice of the tempter is heard.

Monasticism is no more menace to sin than it is to righteousness. Environment, however perfect, places no barrier against evil thoughts or desires or choices. Eden permitted man's original fall. Eden conditions have never realized man's yearning for purity, nor God's expectation of trust. Eutopia as a guarantee either of happiness or of salvation is at best merely a dream from which there is always a rude awakening. If there is any place under heaven where man and woman should be secure in their happiness and integrity it is within the four walls of a home. The very walls of the home are laid upon a foundation of mutual love and confidence. The two who build it are pledged in holy oath to

exclude all whose presence would mar its beauty or menace its security. But alas! how often where love should reign Satan makes his very seat. The environment which should be the breeding ground of every virtue becomes the battling ground of every vice.

Also what a perfect environment fails to do, a perfect religious worship is unable to accomplish. Cast out of the garden, man finds himself confronted with an altar and an explicit demand for worship by the mediation of blood. All the rebellion of will and the evil impulses of the heart alike face that altar with resentment. Ritualistic religion originates no spiritual power sufficient to meet the moral testings that arise both from within and without the human heart. Self yielded to Satan; self asserted against God; self expressing itself in self interests, self will, self yielding sets the powers of one's personality against the person and power and purpose of the eternal God. Then the very altar of reconciliation becomes the provocative cause of estrangement.

It was for this cause that Cain slew Abel and went out from the presence of God, cursed by his sin, a vagabond and wanderer on the face of the earth. In passing it may be remarked with profit that the first proposal of a bloodless religion became the occasion for a bloody murder. Humanitarian schemes of religion all have Cain for a father. The very humanitarianism which

proclaims the universal brotherhood of man and its essential corollary the Fatherhood of God also invariably proceeds to provoke men to fratricidal strife. The nation which has most insistently proclaimed the value and efficiency of human culture as an adequate religion has been the first to unleash the dogs of war and set them upon the world, thus commanding the world to return to the jungle of evil passions that the evil beasts of corrupt and carnal nature might fling themselves with joyous abandon in the unrestrained struggle for the survival of the fittest. The age which has prated most of the evolution of life and progress of civilization to the front where war and pestilence and famine were forever impossible, has reached its climax of glory in an orgy of death and destruction at the hands of their age-old trinity of human sin, shame and sorrow. Only the blood of the Son of God can ever save the sons of men from their blood guiltiness. "The bloody slaughter" of the cross is the only possible cure for the bloody slaughters of the world's many battlefields.

The third effort of man at recovery is revealed in the perfect social order. When Abel had been slain Seth was born under the providence of God to take his place. The seventh from Adam in the line of Seth was Enoch, who walked with God three hundred years and begat sons and daughters, and was not, because God translated him. The social order inaugurated by Seth

reached the climax of its perfection in a fellowship with God so real, so intimate, so pure that the head thereof could step out of earth into heaven without the necessity of changing a single moral garment. His ascension robes were simply the daily deeds of every-day righteousness, the white linen which was the righteous acts of a saint.

But paralleling this evolution of a perfect social order was the devolution of Adam's line through Cain; the seventh outstanding personage of which was Lamech with his bold and blatant blasphemy, his moral self assertion, his defiance both of the conventions of men and of the law of God. Indeed, the world's tragedy of final failure lies in the fact that the sons of God, the line of Seth, married the daughters of the line of Cain. Out of these mongrel marriages the renowned of the earth came into being—men of great stature, of great social standing, of great commercial acumen, of great achievement, of great enterprise. But these great men were moved by evil imaginations, since the imaginations of their heart was to do wickedness continually. Therefore God repented that he had made man in his image, and the devolution processes reached their climax in the crowding of God beneath the threshold of human consciousness. He poured out a flood of waters upon the earth and destroyed the earth with the exception of one man, who had kept his generations perfect;

Gen. 6. Shortly after the flood, with a newly perfected environment, a newly perfected social order, with a newly erected altar, having all before him at one time, Noah discovered that all three means were unavailing in the effort to maintain the integrity of his relation to God. Drunken, naked, discredited and unworthy, he passes from the scene, a broken and disappointing man.

Then God reveals the divine method in dealing with man as a purely individualistic one. The personal relation of the individual to Himself by faith is declared to be God's way when he records the fact that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Genesis 15 : 6.

But the heart of that whole story of the tragedy of human sin and failure lies in the revelation which nestles like a fertile egg of promise in the basket of truth contained in Genesis 3:15. There Satan is told that the curse of God is upon him. There he is promised that the providence of God shall defeat him. There he is assured that the person of God will destroy him. Here is the curse containing the promise: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." That is the word of cheer and comfort and hope which has kept the generations of despairing sinners going.

But has it ever yet been accomplished?

Who is getting the bruising now, the head of the serpent or the heel of the woman's seed? Can there be any doubt? Sin is triumphing in the earth today. Falsehood is on the throne, truth is on the cross. Righteousness has a hard time in the world.

"Our Lord is now rejected
And by the world disowned,
By the many still neglected
And by the few enthroned."

The slums of our cities, the strife of our streets, the wars between the nations, the prevalence of disease and disaster and death, lend eloquent voice to the conviction that not the head of the serpent, but the heel of the woman is being bruised now.

All this is to be changed. There will come a time, though it lies in the future, when the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent. He lies in wait for him. We are not left to wonder when that shall be. The Master shall come again. Then Satan's head shall be bruised. He put Christ on the cross once, leaving wicked men with cruel hands to keep Him there. But the cross could not hold Him. And the grave could not hold Him. And death could not hold Him. And heaven will not be able to hold Him when the fullness of time has come for Him to come back to the earth. We are told in Revelation 20:1-3 that "an angel came down out of heaven having the key of the abyss and a great chain in

his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent which is called the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished." Yes, Satan's head is to be bruised at the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. And finally when He has put all authority and dominion under His feet and has destroyed the last enemy of God and of man, even death itself, then Satan's last weapon having been taken away, Satan himself shall again be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone with the beast and his false prophet, and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. Revelation 20 : 10.

THE REVELATION IN RELATION TO THE NATIONS

The second line of divine revelation is in relation to character and reward. The revelation as regards the nations is one in relation to government and judgment. In Genesis we have the beginning of the chosen seed, Seth; of the chosen race, Shem; of the chosen family, Abraham; of the chosen nation, Israel; of the chosen kingdom, Judah. In Genesis 49 : 9-10, Israel's blessing is upon the head of Judah, "Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; He stooped down, he couched as a lion and as a lioness, who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff

from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be." The American Revised Version translates "till He come to Shiloh having the obedience of the peoples." That has not yet happened. It was out of Judah that David came. And through David the *everlasting covenant of the kingdom and the house and the King was given by God*. But the king has not yet obtained the throne in perpetuity. That waits to be accomplished until He comes having the obedience of the peoples. The nations of the earth must render Him obedience as well as the nation of His own people. Recall our Lord's triumphal entry into the holy city, Jerusalem. He came, according to prophecy, riding upon an ass. The disciples who accompanied Him from Bethlehem, and the crowds who met Him out of the city, greeted Him with a joyous burst of acclamation. Plucking off branches from the trees and casting them in the way, they shouted with joyous abandon: "Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

But the rulers of the Jews rejected this King acclaimed with such acclamation. They came and demanded of Him that He require them to hush their voluble praise. His answer was: "If these be silenced, the very stones will break forth." It was after this that He gave the parable of the king who went into a far country to receive the kingdom. His people sent an embassy after him,

saying, "We will not have this man to rule over us," and the Jews understood that he referred to them when He said, "The King, when he comes again, having received his kingdom, will utterly destroy those miserable sinners." Now come to Isaiah 9 : 1-7. "But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulum and the land of Naphtali; but in the later time hath he made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nation. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation; thou hast increased their joy. They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian. For all the armor of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning, for fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. *Of the increase of His government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth, even forever.* The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this."

Here is a distinct and definite proclamation of God by the mouth of the prophet that the government shall be upon His shoulders. But that surely has not come to pass yet. Jesus Christ does not govern this world. Not even ethically. One may grant that by the Christian faith the gospel proclamation and holy living of Christian people there has been a great quickening of public conscience and the elevation of the moral and social standards of men. But he would indeed be a spiritual optimist of the first water who could think for a single moment that Christ rules anywhere in this world today, save in the hearts of certain individuals. There is no society in which he has undisputed sway, not even in the organized church itself.

There is sitting now in the city of Paris a great peace conference that stands out as the most conspicuous gathering of the sort ever assembled in the history of this world. But even this peace conference, if it accomplishes all that it desires in the organization of the league of nations, cannot give to the world a permanent peace. It cannot put that blessed title of the Divine Master into effect. The world is not yet ready to proclaim Him the Prince of Peace. No, the league of nations cannot give us peace for two reasons. The seeds of discord are sown at the peace conference itself. There have been a good many peace pacts and efforts at universal peace. Solomon, out of his pessimism, born of a truly

material life in a generation which exalted the material as against the spiritual, declared, "There is nothing new under the sun. What has been will be again." There are no ends to human efforts for permanent and universal peace; neither is there any end to the failure of all such efforts. Satan is not dead. It is his hand that has flung the apple of discord among the nations. National ambition, the oppression of the weaker nation by the strong, the resentment at fancied loss, discredited and disappointed national desires, the inherent suspicions of jealousy, and the envy of the smaller nation toward the larger, the arrogance of the strong against the weak—all these things make impossible any other outcome of the peace pact than a new ground for war. Christ was not even invited to their peace conference. Its president is reported to be an agnostic. Around this table are seated Jew, Pagan, Christian, Protestant, Catholic. What place would Jesus Christ have in such a gathering? There is no place there for Him. Let it be understood also that the Lord Jesus Christ would not sit at this peace conference as a conferee. He can and will sit there only as King. But there shall be a peace table at which He will preside as dictator, as master, from whose word there shall be no dissent.

We have a great President. He has tremendous world influence and exercises such in the council of the nations concerning peace among

the nations. But there comes One who does not occupy a place at this peace conference who will overshadow him as far as the glory of the noon-day sun surpasses the light of the tallow candle. The influence of Mr. Wilson at the present peace conference as compared to the influence that Jesus Christ will exert at the final peace conference is as a small breeze in the presence of a great tornado. What a terrific challenge God throws into the world in the second Psalm. The very Christ whom the nations now reject, whose terms and conditions of peace are ignored, whose foundation of righteousness is set aside, this very Christ is to supersede all others in the peace-making business. Now He is at the right hand of God to intercede for sinners. But one day He will come again to take the throne and govern the world in righteousness, so that out of His government peace shall come to all nations. One is reminded of that terrible warning contained in the second Psalm: "Why do the nations rage and the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh; the Lord will have them in derision. Then will He speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure: Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto

me, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them in pieces; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now therefore be wise. Oh, ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish in the way, for His wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in Him." And again in the face of that promise of God made by the prophet, Isaiah, looms larger on the horizon: "He shall be called the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; the government of the nations shall be upon His shoulders." It is still true that in spite of the rage and imagination of men, in spite of the overweening ambition of dreaming idealists, it is to the name of Jesus that every knee shall bow in heaven and in earth and every tongue shall confess the glory of God the Father.

AT HIS SECOND COMING

But all this lies in the future—at His second coming. Now He is Saviour. Today He lives at the right hand of God to make intercession for men. Today the Gospel of grace, the invitations of love are in His name proclaimed. Today everywhere in this world guilty sinners may come to the fountain which He opened upon Calvary and

in that crimson tide wash their guilty sins away. In Him the world is both invited to find and secure peace with God. This is the age of the church, which in turn is laid in the times of the Gentiles. In this age the Lord Jesus does not deal with nations as such. He deals with individuals. He would deal with you today and now on terms of infinite compassion, of unspeakable love and of mercy which endures forever. He brings in His dripping hands the overflowing of God's grace in the forgiveness of sins, the sanctification of life, the redemption of the body, the gift of immortality.

How can the world be indifferent to Him now, especially in view of the fact that the day of grace is to end; that the church period is to reach its climax; that the times of the Gentiles shall find their fullness, and He whom the heavens have received until the restitution of all things shall come again, not as Saviour, but as King? Then the day of grace shall have passed forever. Opportunities of accepting Him will be forever gone. His coming will indeed be a triumph to those who in love and faith watch for him. But His coming will also be the tragedy of tragedies, unspeakably calamitous to those who reject Him and refuse now to give heed to the overtures of His love and the invitation of His mercy.

How foolish also for any church in this day of grace, this age of individual revelation of God through Jesus Christ to men, this day of personal

dealings of men with God and of God with men, to undertake to direct or to administer the several affairs of the governments of this world. What a prostitution of divine grace to turn the one divine institution for which Christ shed His precious blood into an agent of reform, a medium of political and economic and social propaganda, however fine and appealing these programs may be.

Oh, no; that is not the business of the church. *The national aspect, the social aspect of the Gospel belongs to "the Gospel of the kingdom."* *The times of the nations will come when the nation of God's people is restored and He deals with the nations again through the nation whose king and ruler shall be King Jesus.* This will occur when the times of the Gentiles is complete. Isaiah 42 : 1-4: "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry, not lift up His voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will He not break, and a dimly burning wick will He not quench. He will bring forth justice in truth. *He will not fail nor be discouraged till He have set justice in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law.*" Isaiah 66 : 19-23: "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations to Tarshish, Pul and Lud; that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off,

that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an oblation unto Jehovah, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith Jehovah, as the children of Israel bring their oblation in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah. And of them also will I take for priests and for Levites, saith Jehovah." Zechariah 2: 11-12. "And many nations shall join themselves to Jehovah in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And Jehovah shall inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and shall yet choose Jerusalem." For further reference of the same character read Hebrews 1: 5 following, II Samuel 7: 16 and Psalm 110.

In that day Israel shall be restored. The Greater Son of David shall be established on the throne of David as King of Righteousness. He shall rule as Prince of Peace and into His kingdom all the nations shall bring their glory and honor.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

In Matthew 24: 32 Jesus tells His disciples in response to the question, What are the signs of Thy coming? "Now from the fig tree learn a

parable: When her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh, even at the door." What are these things? The preceding verses of the 24th chapter of Matthew indicates that many shall come in Christ's name, saying: "I am Christ and many shall be led astray. There shall be wars and rumors of wars. Nation shall rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. There shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. The saints shall be delivered up unto the great tribulation. They shall be killed and hated of all nations for Christ's sake. Many shall stumble and shall deliver up one another and shall hate one another. Many false prophets shall arise and lead many astray. Iniquity shall be multiplied and the love of many shall wax cold. The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all the world for a testimony unto all the nations and then shall the end come."

How pregnant this day is with these signs. Truly the pangs of travail are upon the times like a woman in labor, and there shall be presently born a new age, the fullness of the Gentiles having come.

He is at the door. I cannot speak dogmatically of the order of events. I can only tell you with very great joy and with very great tenderness, that His coming presages two events of world importance. First, that which we call The

Rapture. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel, and both those who are dead in Christ and those who are living and await His coming, shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. So shall they be forever with the Lord. We shall delay with Him in the air while the period of the great tribulation falls upon the earth. With our going the Holy Spirit also departs from the earth. He who has restrained the man of sin will take away the restraint of His presence. The gospel of grace shall cease to be preached and Satan will have his way in the earth unhindered.

After that the Lord Jesus shall come with His saints, setting up His throne and administering the affairs of the nations of this earth. Oh, may you be led now before it is too late to give Him your life, so that when He comes you may not be left, but may be among the number of those who, like the heart of the bride at the voice of the bridegroom, shall leap with joy at the voice and the presence of the Beloved.

CHAPTER II

The Judgment of Israel

CHAPTER II.

THE JUDGMENT OF ISRAEL

“And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see My judgment that I have executed, and My hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward. And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them; so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; And I hid My face from them.” Ez. 39 : 21-24.

The men of this generation have never understood the significance of the gospel message. Equally sure is it that “the gospel of the kingdom” is unknown both to the world and to the church. The gospel is not an incident of this modern age. It is not a plaything in the thought life of the age, with which men may juggle at their pleasure. It is the revelation of God’s dealings with man down through the centuries, from the beginning of time till its end. *It is a revelation of God’s government in the earth.*

We need to realize that Almighty God is the moral executive of this universe. Isaiah gives

utterance to the statement that the coming Messiah shall be called, among other wonderful names, the Everlasting Father. Perhaps this means that Jehovah shall be the Father of the ages, the Author of the dispensations, the Maker of the times and seasons in which men live and with which God deals.

God governs, never doubt it. God will govern to the end and in triumph His truth and His person and His authority will issue.

The beginning of His government was a theocracy—immediate rule of God over man. You have but to run back over the stories of the Old Testament to see how clearly this is set forth. First there is the dispersion of the nations at Babel. Then out of Ur of Chaldea He calls Abraham and speaks to him with personal interviews, directs his faith from earth to heaven, and when at last he submits his will to Him, it is said that “Abraham believed God and He counted that to him for righteousness.” The same story is told in His revelation to Jacob at Jabbok, who became Prince of God and prince with man when, face to face with God, he surrendered himself and all to God and thus received once again the gift of the promised land.

Moses in the wilderness sees the burning bush and turns aside to see. The inspired record has it that “when God saw that Moses turned aside to see, He spoke to him out of the burning bush” and sent him down to Egypt to bring

Israel out of his bondage; gave him his rod as his medium of miracle working; conversed with him face to face; ruled through him as he ruled in him, mediatorily. And when at last he brought Israel out of Egypt, it was to guide them by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. The climax of the revelation concerning God and Israel is that the tent of meeting was established as the National Capitol and God, the Ruler of the Nation, spoke to the Nation out of the tent of meeting.

To understand the significance of the book of Exodus is to know that the heart of the book is the last verses of the last chapter, which declares that the tent of meeting was there and God was in the tent—the National Capitol was established in the tent of meeting. The heart of the nation was here. It was the place of worship, the place of revelation, the place of government.

When this is understood to be true, you will know how terrible for Israel was his sin of rebellion against God. From the beginning of his national history till this moment, Israel has been in rebellion against Jehovah. Revolt started when the leaders of the people came to Samuel and demanded that he give them a *king like the nations round about them*. Three hundred years God had ruled them through judges. Through visions and dreams He manifested His presence. Now Israel demanded that the old pastor should

resign and get out of the way. They must have a new ruler—a king like the nations round about them. Samuel is broken hearted. He does what alone is left for a man to do—he talked to the people and to God. And God said to him: “Samuel, they have not rejected you. They have rejected me. They have not set you aside. They have set me aside.” And *then* the disintegration of Israel began. It was a deliberate revolt against God, a deliberate rejection of the theocracy. Thus, too, has it been with the nations of the earth. They are now, and ever have been, in revolt against the government of God. For this reason it is written, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, *with the nations that forget God.*” There grows upon me a profound conviction that when people call themselves by the name of Christ it becomes increasingly sinful through the ages for that people to make alliances with any nation or any institution whose God is not Jehovah. If I had any fear and trembling for my nation today, it would be this, that we are entering into alliance with all sorts and conditions of peoples. The Paris peace conference indicates the conglomerate character of the proposed league of nations. *We who are professedly a Christian nation* are about to enter into a league of nations, and into an international alliance, with nations that are altogether pagan. Protestant nations with Catholic and pagan, to build a great world democracy without any reference to the

honor and integrity of Jehovah God. Of course, this is not a Christian nation. There is none such in the earth. There can be none till Jesus the Lord comes again. But we call ourselves such. And that claim puts the nation under obligations to foreswear any alliance with pagan nations. "How can two walk together except they be agreed? What part hath a believer with an unbeliever? What part hath Christ with Belial?" It was for this reason the prophets were sent with warnings, threatenings and promises. Always the promise was coupled with the warning. Romans 10:21, "But as to Israel he saith, all the day long did I spread out My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." In spite of the prophets and their messages of warnings, Israel was always stiff-necked and disobedient.

This arraignment of the nation on the lips of the first martyr, Stephen, was that for which they killed him. Their habit and spirit of rebellion, their rejection of God as king, grew through the centuries, till at last they rejected Jesus, the promised king, the Messiah of all their prophecies. It was the rejected king who wept over Jerusalem and cried: "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and you would not? But now, your house is left unto you desolate."

The rulers of the people, the Sanhedrin, deliberately and finally rejected Jesus as the Messiah

Prince, and thus committed the nation anew to that rebellion which began when they came to Samuel and demanded a king like the nations round about them.

Now rebellion demands judgment and always receives it. Had Israel not been too stupid to learn, each succeeding generation must have been won back from its apostacy and rebellion to the service of God, to the rejection of every other form of government and the reinstatement of a theocracy. However, while God's judgments linger and His mercy endureth forever, His demands of government and judgment are inevitable and inexorable.

In one of our western states some time ago, an infidel, scoffing at the Christian church, wrote to a local daily paper a letter in which he stated that he did not believe in Christianity, revere its God, nor concern himself with its great teachings. Among other things, he discredited and rejected the Christian Sabbath. He had planted his potatoes and his grain on Sunday. He deliberately planned to work them on that day, and at that time, the 22nd of October, having finished gathering his crops, he was prepared to say that he had a larger and better crop than any of his neighbors, that he himself was in good health and prosperity. He challenged the world at large to know what they had to say about it. The editor, a very wise Christian man, wrote one line in reply, to which he signed his name. This was the

word written, "God does not settle His accounts on the 22nd of October."

That is pre-eminently true. God may endure in mercy His disobedient people for a long while, but be sure no sin goes unpunished, no rebellion escapes the divine retribution.

THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD

In Ezekiel 14:21 God tells us what His judgments of a sinful nation are: "For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the evil beasts, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast!" We are not left in doubt then as to the meaning of these four terrible judgments of the nation of Israel at the last. May we not, with equal propriety, assume that war and famine and pestilence, the presence of evil beasts in the lands overrun by the other three, form nemesis of judgment to any nation, to any people? Added to these four judgments for Israel, especially was that of dispersion among the nations. They were scattered for a distinct and definite purpose. For we are told in Ezekiel 39 : 21: "And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword." Persecutions followed the dispersion. An illustration of this truth is found in

the case of Haman and Mordecai, when the Babylonian captives were put in jeopardy of death because of the impatience and envious spite of a wicked Gentile king's prime minister. So it has often been among the nations in which Israel has been scattered.

The final sin and the final judgment of Israel was its rejection of Jesus the Christ as the King. Luke 21:20-24 tells us that story in the Master's own terrible words: "But when you see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. *For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.* Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days, for there shall be great distress upon the land and wrath unto this people, and they shall fall by the edge of the sword and shall be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This prophecy of our Lord shall be fulfilled. When the Roman armies encompassed and destroyed the city of Jerusalem in A. D. 70 and the Jewish nation was dispersed among the nations of the earth, from that day until this, persecution and exploitation of the Jew has been a favorite pursuit of modern nations. The wandering Jew is found the wide world over. In many lands he has been forbidden to own property, deprived of all civil rights, made the victim of popular hate and public clamor, oppressed, mal-

treated, exiled and murdered. Forbidden to own property, they have been driven, as in the case of the Jews of Austria and Bohemia, to make their wealth by lending money as bankers and money changers. At this they have proved to be masters and have accumulated many marvelous fortunes, so much so, that when the right to own property was granted to the Jews in those countries within the past half-century, they began to purchase property at such a rate that it is now said that sixty per cent of all the real estate of Austria is owned by the Jews. This wisdom of money-making and property-gathering acquired through the centuries of the dispersion and spoliation will doubtless become the genius which shall give to the citizens who rehabilitate Palestine in the new kingdom of Judah, the ability to make great wealth and make Jerusalem once again the object of activities and desires of the nations round about. For the treasures of the temple and the palace of the king always before proved a sore temptation to Egypt, to Assyria and to Babylon. In the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of Ezekiel we are told that the hordes of the north country will sweep down upon Judea to destroy her cities and take the spoil. Many believe that that will be the main cause of the final battle of Armageddon, in the midst of which the Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth, placing His feet, according to prophecy, upon Mount Olivet, which will be rent asunder at His presence. His

presence will overturn all the foul schemes of the enemies of Christ and re-establish the nation in righteousness and in peace.

THE TIME OF RESTITUTION

While Israel has rejected Jehovah, God has not rejected His people. With a great passion, Paul asks in Romans 11:1, "Has God cast off His people? God forbid. God did not cast off His people whom He foreknew." Certainly there is a remnant that shall return and be saved. In Luke 21:24 the Lord Jesus tells us that "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.*" The times of the Gentiles spans that period of the world's history in which no account is taken of the history of the Jewish people as a nation, from Nebuchadnezzar till the end of the present age.

But in Romans 11:26-27 the prophet Isaiah is quoted: "There shall come out of Zion the deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, that is, the hill of the king's palace in Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation. The Jew today is the undigested Jonah of the Gentile whale. But nations will yet eject him. For the Jew is to be recovered to his native land, his native temple is to be rebuilt, his native government to be re-established, the forms of his service and his worship restored. Therefore, the

presence of the Jew in the world today is the guarantee of two things.

God has sworn with an oath that the seed of David shall sit upon the throne of David forever. Therefore, the presence of the Jew anywhere is the guarantee of the fulfillment of this divine promise. There are sixteen million Jews in the world today. Everyone of them is a distinct and definite reason for the return of the Jew to Palestine, and the return of Christ to reign on the throne of David. Wherever you find him, as merchant or mendicant, as politician or peddler, as financial baron, in the Ghetto of New York, in the stock exchange of London, on the Bourse of Paris, in the Alps or Algiers, in the far away oriental lands, every Jew challenges the world's faith in the fact that God's promise, confirmed by His oath, shall ultimately be fulfilled, and Christ shall return to this world. It cannot be otherwise. Scripture cannot be broken. Two things, therefore, are apparent: The nations of the earth are to know that Israel was scattered because they had sinned. Ezekiel 39:21-23. Now in utter contrast to that is this promise: "But Israel and Judah shall be gathered together again without sin." In Jeremiah 50:20, "In those days and in that time, saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve."

It will be observed that in every case where

God warns His people of the destruction of the nation, or of its abandonment, He asserts that a remnant shall remain faithful, devoted and expectant.

Now how shall we reconcile these two passages, that the nations shall know that Israel is scattered because of his sins, and that Israel and Judah shall be without sins? Read the argument beginning with Hebrews 6:13 and ending with Hebrews 9:28. God has given a strong encouragement to His people, the Hebrews of the dispersion. Having given them a promise, He confirmed it by swearing by Himself "that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong encouragement who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil, whither Jesus as forerunner has entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

The argument from that point is concerning the priest, who is also king. The close of the argument is in the statement of Hebrews 9:28, "So Christ also having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin to them that wait for Him, unto Salvation." This argument and climax perhaps cannot be explained so well any otherwise, as by the exposition of Leviticus 16. Therein is the story

told of the scapegoat. The procedure seems to have been as follows: Once a year the high priest, the only person in the world privileged to do so, came into the holiest of holy places wherein was the ark of the covenant containing the golden mercy seat and the cherubim. Upon his first entrance therein he carried in his hand the blood of the bull which was sprinkled upon the mercy seat in atonement for his own sins. *So when the high priest emerged from the holiest of holy places the first time, he came forth the sinless priest.* Now awaiting him at the door of the tabernacle were two goats, the goat of Jehovah and the goat of Azazel, or removal. The goat of Jehovah was slain, and the sinless high priest took the blood of this goat and bore it within the veil, sprinkling upon the golden mercy seat, as before he had sprinkled the blood of the bull, with this difference, that, whereas the blood of the bull had made atonement *for his sins*, the blood of the goat made atonement *for the sins of the nation, the people.* *So when the high priest came the second time from within the veil, he came as a sinless priest unto a sinless nation.* Then the goat of Azazel was sent by the chosen man into the wilderness to appear no more, and the whole sin problem of the nation for that year was effectively disposed of. The favor of God was at once restored and assured. Now taking the chapters six to nine of the book of Hebrews, we discover that the nation, though dispersed, is reminded of the covenant oath of

Abraham. Beginning with the thirteenth verse of the sixth chapter of Hebrews, the Holy Spirit speaks as follows: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And thus having patiently endured, He obtained the promise, for men swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, *entering into that which is within the veil. Whither the forerunner, Jesus, entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.*"

Now all the remainder of the seventh, eighth and ninth chapters is an argument concerning the high priest, the covenant and the holy place. That argument ends with this significant statement in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses of the ninth chapter, "*Inasmuch* as it was appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment, so Christ also having been once offered, to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin to them that await Him unto salvation." Note the emphasis upon "*the second time.*" We

know that when He came the first time into the world, He came a sinless high priest, and He came out of the holiest of holies in heaven, that is, from within the veil. While upon the earth, He offered His own blood, an all sufficient sacrifice and substitution in atonement for the sins of many. When He ascended into heaven, and according to the significant language of Hebrews 6:19, "entered into that which is within the veil," it was to present within the holiest of holy places this all sufficient blood of atonement. When the fullness of the times has come, this sinless high priest is to emerge once again, a second time, from within the veil, not only as a sinless priest, but unto a sinless nation. For, as He descends out of heaven upon the clouds, they shall see Him, and in an instant, believing in this returning Priest who is also King, a nation shall be born in a day. This sinless nation will receive the sinless priest, who is also King, and He will be enthroned immediately upon the throne of His father, David, to fulfill the divine oath, thus attesting the faithfulness of the promise of God to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob and to David. Thus, there shall be a restitution of all things; the nation being restored, the throne of David shall be restored, the king shall be restored to the throne, and then that king who is king of Salem, and high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, sitting upon the throne in the kingdom of God, will restore the theocracy upon the earth.

What is the practical conclusion of this great thought? Consider how many times God offered Himself to His chosen people, how again and again He stretched out His arms to them, though gainsaying, stiffnecked and disobedient. He arose early and sent unto them, by the mouth of His prophets, warnings and invitations and loving counsel. Constantly His people rejected His counsel, refused His rule, disobeyed Him, until the climax of tragedy was written in the divine statement that "*He came unto His own and they that were His own received Him not.*" Along the whole path of their history stand out these signposts and reminders of their stubborn and rebellious sinfulness, and from post to post, along this journey of the nation, lie ruin and desolation and death.

These are the things that rejection of theocracy have wrought throughout all the centuries. Does that teach us nothing? Does scattered Israel mean nothing? Has its woe and desolation, its abandonment, its distress, its national experiences no message to men today? This is the age of grace. The gospel brings to you the overtures of divine mercy. God warns and invites and lovingly and tenderly persuades. Learn wisdom then today. By the tragedy of Israel's ruin, be persuaded to repent now. Yield now to this same divine Lord, who is Saviour, who ever lives at the right hand of God to make intercession for you. He invites you to come, to receive through Him

atonement for your sins, to yield the control of your life to Him as King and as Lord, to be kept by the power of God through faith unto that perfect salvation which is to be revealed. Your only hope is in this day of grace. Directly when He comes it will be judgment to those who have disbelieved, and the closing of the door of opportunity in the face of those who have so long rejected His loving invitation. Yield now!

CHAPTER III

The Times of the Gentiles

CHAPTER III.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Who are the Gentiles? First, they are, in a very rough and broad definition, all the peoples of this world who do not belong to the Semitic race. The Semites are those descendants of Shem, to whom God gave the supreme blessing of becoming the vehicles of His revelation in the world. Out of the Semitic tribes, all the tribes of the earth who have persistently maintained a monotheistic religion have come—the Mohammedans and the Jews. The Mohammedans are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's first-born son. The Jews are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's only son in the Covenant sense.

The Gentile nations are the nations of the earth in contrast to *the* nation, the one outstanding spiritual nation, the nation Israel. That nation was peculiar among all the nations of the earth. It was an elect nation, a nation selected by God, apart from any merit of its own, but simply to be among the nations a nation of a theocratic form of government—a government by God, immediately ruling the people. Israel was designed to be a sample of what the world would be if God should rule—righteousness and justice, equality of brotherhood and humanity developed to the highest possible degree. Israel had a remarkable

career planned for him by Jehovah, and had Israel yielded himself to God's indwelling and to His government, centuries ago, sin would have died in the world, and the national governments of this world would all have been brought into God's kingdom.

There is a remarkable passage in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, in which this statement is made concerning this nation Israel: "Thy light shall break forth as the morning, and thy healing shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of Jehovah shall be thy rearward." We can get a better conception of what God meant to the nation when we translate the word rearward by the word "background"—"The glory of Jehovah shall be thy background." What a simple setting forth of the divine plan for the nation! Here it is: Its government, its peoples, its ideals, its customs, its social organizations, its political machinery was to have as its background the glory of Jehovah God. Thus we must ever understand the Jew in the light of God's holiness. Both God's oath and His prophecies assure us that men cannot understand the Jew's presence in the world today unless they see this whole program of Israel in its background of divine glory.

Some years ago, it was my privilege one morning to walk through the Vatican Library. Intensely interested in the many wonderful things displayed there, I was suddenly startled, upon looking up to a great window, to see the all but

living face of Gregory the Great looking down at me. Some master builder had, with true artistic instinct, so assembled the art glass and precious jewels as to make a perfect likeness of this great leader of the Roman church. Instinctively, one held his breath, all but expectant that that glowing face, those living eyes, those all but breathing lips would speak in audible words. But it was not the art glass nor the jewels assembled there which gave that face its glory. Back of this, the sun had risen in the sky and was now pouring its glory down upon the glass and the jewels. The glory of the sun had become the background for the window, and this made its glory.

Thus with Israel. Its poetry, its prophecy, its national organization, its whole history, has its glory in the glory of Jehovah. God meant this to be a nation, glorious in its holiness, challenging the world by that holiness and the perfection of the divine revelation in and through it.

But that consummation of the divine purpose and plan failed through Israel's rebellion. Stiff-necked, stubborn to the last degree, they always resisted the Holy Spirit. They could never be persuaded to yield a willing obedience to the divine Shepherd. Like wandering sheep they foolishly strayed, constantly disregarding His voice, resisting His persuasions.

However, there is a most comforting statement in II Timothy 2:12-13 concerning all God's purposes and promises: "Therefore, I endure all

things for the elect sake, that they also may obtain salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Faithful is the saying, for if we deny Him, He also will deny us; *if we are faithless, He abideth faithful* for He cannot deny Himself." Concerning Israel, God has taken oath that they should yet dwell in the land; that glory in righteousness and peace should be permanently established; that the nation should be the head and not the tail among the nations of the earth; that out of Jerusalem and Mt. Zion the law should go forth; that all the nations of the earth should gather in Jerusalem to hear the word of wisdom and authority from the lips of Jehovah. It is declared in Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

All this is yet to be realized and the promise

of its realization is in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this." When the government is upon His shoulders, when of peace there is no end, when the throne of the Messiah is upheld with justice and with righteousness forevermore, then the glory of Israel His servant will be perfected and established in the earth.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

There is a period in the divine record of history designated "the times of the Gentiles." What is this time? Briefly, it may be answered, all that time in history occupying the elision in Jewish history from the time of Jewish apostacy and the rejection of the nation as such by Jehovah, until the restoration of the nation and return of the Messiah Prince at the times of the end. This elision in Jewish history began with the Babylonian captivity, when Jechoniah, last of the Davidic line to reign upon the throne of David in Jerusalem, was taken captive, Jeremiah 24:1, and the

nation was finally dissolved through the triumph of Babylonian arms. *It will end at the second coming of Christ.* In Luke 21:24, the Lord Jesus declares that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled." During this time of Gentile supremacy, the nations, other than the nation Israel, must have full opportunity to try out their plans of government. Every conceivable human scheme will be wrought into governmental organization, and under it, men will seek happiness and righteousness and peace. Under all forms, however, men shall be disappointed and ultimately discouraged. This time of the Gentiles shall see the rise and fall of autocracies, monarchies, oligarchies, democracies, republics. There will be a great variety of governments, with an unending monotony of humanitarian religions. Everything except theocracy will be tried out. Every law possible to the imagination of human minds will be given a free hand, except the law of God. The nations will be unhindered of God in their efforts to produce the best possible government. Indeed, they will be helped by the presence in them of many of God's saints who will translate out of their heavenly citizenship into their earthly governmental environment many of the principles of the heavenly kingdom.

But all these will not produce the desired result. The times of the Gentiles will be completed, but completed with failure. It may be

recalled that when God gave Palestine, the promised land, to the nation Israel, He waited to dispossess the nations until the cup of their iniquity was filled full. So the times of the Gentiles will fill up the cup of their failure—a failure brought about by a forgetfulness of God and rebellion against His government. Their full achievement, their best for humanity, without God, is miserable failure.

What a stupendous failure all human governments are making now! Measure the government of any nation under heaven by the one standard of righteousness. Everywhere strife, corruption, greed, prostitution of public office, degradation of public morals, the deterioration of national morale along all lines of individual and concerted action. Take the American nation, of which her citizens would surely say no better government has yet been established among men. Yet, in this nation, statistics of vice and crime indicate that three hundred thousand girls every year, become the victim of the lust of men, and are degraded beyond recovery. In this same ideal nation where the people are supposed to rule, and where so many believe that the voice of the people is the voice of God, it is said that seven hundred and fifty thousand victims of strong drink go down every year to their graves, miserable wrecks of humanity whose souls likewise plunge unprepared into the presence of an outraged God. This nation, climax of all human efforts at government, fore-

most in its altruistic activities among the nations of the earth and in the presentation of moral ideals to the earth, has licensed and legalized the business which is directly and indirectly responsible for the death and damnation of one million souls a year.

Yet some tell us that the world is becoming so good, its ideals so ethical, its brotherhood so altruistic, its service so generous and sacrificial, that we are even now entering upon the millennium of activity which shall in itself be the kingdom of God through the immanence of His spirit.

No, that is not true. Rather the world is becoming so corrupted, its moral degradation so deep, its devolution so hopeless that even the saints of God would be in despair were there no promise that the Son of God would surely come to sweep aside all these failing efforts of man and set up a new government of His own in righteousness and in peace, that He would bring under His sovereignty all the nations and all the governments of the earth.

GENTILE CHARACTERISTICS

The times of the Gentiles as revealed in the scriptures have three outstanding characteristics.

BOUNDARY FIXING

First and foremost among the activities of the times of the Gentiles is the making of boundaries for nations. The critics now tell us that the ninth

and tenth chapters of Genesis have no historical value; that this is a later effort on the part of some ardent patriot of the nation of Israel to exalt the Semitic race to the detriment of all other peoples. Away with such piffle! Let the inspired word of God speak. Each of the three sons of Noah is given a definite task and a definite place in the earth. The task of the sons of Japheth is set forth, Genesis 10:5, "By these were the coast lands of the nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue, after their families in their nations." Such a mission for the other sons of Noah is not even hinted. This is to be the peculiar task of Japheth. It was but a little while after this assignment to the Gentiles of the business of making nations, that the first league of nations was undertaken. Genesis 11:1-9. From that time until this, nation building has been the business of the Gentiles. Nations, great and small, have been organized, established, have run their little course and gone down under the corroding touch of time and circumstance.

World empires looming large upon the horizon of history have wielded mighty influence, and for short seasons have given promise of establishing under one central authority, stable and permanent peace, but always the element of righteousness has been lacking; so each succeeding world empire has been wrecked, and the house of human hopes has fallen in ruins. Nation after nation has ceased to be as it came to be under

the provident purpose of God. Goldsmith well says in his "Deserted Village":

"Princes and potentates may flourish or may fade,
A breath can make them as a breath has made."

You have seen children playing on the floor, building each his house of blocks. As it was completed and he began to view with pride his perfected work, his fellow would tumble it down. Perhaps you have seen children on the floor organizing themselves into a league of builders and putting a big stick into the hand of some big boy and making him guardian of the peace of their little world in minature. He is to keep peace and preserve the houses built up by breaking the heads of the offenders against peace. But, alas, the first head he undertakes to break precipitates trouble and then the minature league of builders breaks up in a free-for-all fight. So is it likely to be with any league of nations, even the present. Today the nations of the world, forgetful of Jehovah, are running here and there casting His bands away, breaking His bonds asunder, proposing to build their own league of nations. And, out of the crowd they have selected one nation, even our own, and are proposing to put into our hands a big stick with which to police and protect the world and maintain the permanence of peace. One can hardly doubt the ultimate issue. The national and international programs still contemplate the expenditure of enormous sums for the building

and maintenance of great armies and navies. Statesmen still count universal military training a political necessity. Unpreparedness for war will still be counted an economic and political crime. The glories even more than the horrors of war will be made a part of our public school curricula. The exploits of war heroes will continue to be made the ideal and pattern of all greatness. The Christian church enamored of its unholy alliances with the world and the flesh, fatuously dreaming of Christianizing the social order, having largely substituted a reformatory for a regenerative gospel; seeking a plausible excuse for its habits of self gratulation in its misguided efforts to shape and determine the programs of national and international governments, ceases to be the salt of the earth or the light of the world. Therefore, it has not found courage to voice an authoritative message of protest against all wars, nor to warn the governments that it will not again be made a party in sympathy or in fact to a program of murder and destruction. It yet fears a charge of treason against human governments more than the fact of treason against her Lord. So it, too, yet indorses, applauds and depends upon man-made programs of peace. These proposals for peace belie peace and make it pre-eminently impossible. "Except Jehovah build a house, they labor in vain that build it.

Of course, God has no place in the present program of the world league of nations. Gath-

ered about that conference table are men of every religious and of no religious convictions—heathen, pagan, agnostics, Catholics, Protestants, militarists, pacifists—each of whom is asked to surrender some portion of his vital conviction in order to reach the composite promise of a union, all the while leaving Jehovah and His righteousness outside. So it shall come to pass as it always has, “the wicked with the nations that forget God shall be turned into Sheol.” We shall yet hear our modern Solomons among the statesmen crying out in a rude awakening from their Utopian dreams, “Vanity of vanities, all in vanity.”

The progress of the nations is a heap of ruins. The memorials of human governments erected along the pathway of time are the memorials of failure, of crumbling empires, tottering thrones, of disintegrating governments. Jackals and owls nest in the ruins of ancient cities whose glories and dominions were commensurate with the vast domain of world empires. Today in every land, ethnologists and historians are busy, not in viewing the greatness and glories of successful empires, but in making excavations among their ruins that they may collect from these strange libraries some fragments of the doings and dealings of those who before them have gone the way of all the earth to disappointment and failure. It is written in the second Psalm concerning the nations that busy themselves in such enterprises: “Why do the nations tumultuously assemble and

the people meditate a vain thing? He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh, the Lord will have them in derision; thus will He speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree; Jehovah said unto me, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. *Ask of me and I will give Thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* Now, therefore, be wise, oh, ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry and ye perish in the way, for His wrath will soon be kindled." Yes, the Son of God of whose kingdom there shall be no end in righteousness and peace, shall sweep aside all, even the best efforts of man. It is his purpose to restore His ancient people, Israel, to the promised land. Himself reigning over them upon the throne of David and through them to govern all the nations of the earth. Thus the saints who compose the church, called out from among the peoples, shall come into their own. For it is written: "And He will come with ten thousands of His saints," Jude 14. It is written again: we shall "judge the world," I Cor. 6:2, and again in Daniel 7:18-22 and 27, "But the saints of the most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and

forever. Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possess the kingdom forever, even forever, and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Here is the end of the age.

A great business man once said: "I would not live for a single day in the city with its tremendous challenge of materialism, if there were no Christ preached in it. No churches, no preachers, no gospel, no saints bearing testimony to the presence of Christ." If the presence of Christ, so mystical, so intangible, as realized now is so potent a thing, what will it not be in that day when He shall sit bodily upon the throne of David and govern the world? When all of it shall really be ruled by Him.

In that program where will you appear? Where will this nation appear with its hundred and ten million citizens of whom only forty million even nominally confess His Lordship now? Where will the individual appear if, as Isaiah tells us, "*the nations are as the small dust of the balance.*" How will the man who resists God, rejects His Christ, refuses His rule now, appear then?

BUILDING ENTERPRISES

But again, the times of the Gentiles are times of great building enterprises. Nebuchadnezzar

builded his Babylon and glowed with unspeakable pride over the work of his hands. Daniel 4:29-30, "At the end of twelve months he was walking in the royal palace of Babylon. The king spake and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling place by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?'" Thus, also, Greece builded her palaces of art and her public buildings so rich and inspiring, even in their ruins challenging the world's admiration for beauty and charm till this very hour.

So, imperial Rome builded her roads that remain till the present day. Witness the glory in ruins of her Coliseum and the splendor of her St. Peter's Church, each of which could contain ninety thousand individuals.

Such also has been the career of France and Germany, of England and America. The world travels from nation to nation to see the challenging wonders and the splendors of her architectural and commercial buildings. These nations have builded their ships and bridges, their skyscrapers and factories, their public works and monuments, their mausoleums and memorials, their churches and temples. The world today is beside itself with pride of achievement and presumption in enterprise. Materialism prevails everywhere, and one of the saw-sophisms of the present is: "Money talks." One can almost hear the Master with grave and compassionate voice deliver his parable of the rich fool. He had builded and succeeded.

Farm had been added to farm. Fields had been forced to increase their yielding capacity until the barns which had been sufficient, no longer sufficed, and with great pride and boastfulness he said, in the very spirit of the world today: "I will tear down these barns and build greater. I will gather into them my crops and substance, and then I will say to my soul: 'Soul, thou hast much goods gathered up for many years, now eat. Take thy rest.'" But the God who laughs at the pretensions of man and avenges their neglect of Himself held him in derision and said: "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee. Then whose shall all these things be?"

Thus also of the nations: They have builded great empires and greater enterprises. All shall fall. There is a stone cut out of the mountain side without hands, and it shall fall upon these nations and utterly crush them. The last great monument, all these marvelous achievements of human enterprise shall be crushed and ground to powder and scattered to the four winds of heaven *when the Lord Jesus comes again*. As He said of the temple at Jerusalem when His disciples came to Him to show Him the beauty of the building and the splendor of its glory: "Seest thou all these things? Not one stone shall be left upon another." History tells us how Napoleon, with his victorious armies, looted the nations and brought the glories of their art and wealth into Paris. Thus the Germans looted the nations and transported their

wealth and other treasures into Berlin. But One is to come to govern this world and reign upon the throne of universal authority, according to the divine promise, who shall not loot the nations, but govern them in righteousness and peace, so that all the nations shall count it their supremest joy and privilege to bring unto Him their glory and riches and dominion and power and lay them at His feet who alone is worthy to reign. This will be accomplished when He comes again.

THE TIMES OF GREAT MEN

The times of the Gentiles are the times of great men. There is a mistaken notion abroad in the earth that success and greatness and renown are an indication of the favor of God. According to the divine revelation, more often are these things indicative of man's forgetfulness of God. Take the times before the flood came to pass, as recorded in Genesis 6:1-4, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all that they chose. And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for that he also is flesh, yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years. The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; *the same were the mighty men*

that were of old, the men of renown." The climax of this statement is that the flood came upon the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown, the men of invention and discovery, men of science and learning, men of knowledge and wisdom and power, men who undertook and achieved great things, and who stood out like towering human peaks in the mountain range of human greatness above the lowlands of mediocrity, men who challenged the elements and overcame them, men who defied the elemental dangers and survived them, men who rejoiced in the challenge of field and forest, of sea and circumstance and made their power known and wrote their names in successive steps as they climbed the ladder of success to the pinnacle of human greatness and renown. In them mingled the moral fibers of godly fathers and the winsome charm of socially successful mothers, a combination that made the greatness of human personality, but crowded God beneath the threshold of human consciousness, provoked in the world an utter deification of man and an utter neglect and disregard of God.

They were such men as live in so great numbers today, who tell us that man is able to guarantee a world without pestilence, a world without war. It is nothing to them that this good boast has been made many times and never made good. The age now is on tiptoe with expectancy for the coming of the superman. This is his day. "When man on tiptoe strives to hear the message of a

sister sphere, yearning to reach the cosmic wires that flash infinity's desires."

The whole tendency of the times of the Gentiles is to deify man. There is hardly a public park or governmental building in any civilized nation that has not in it the statue of some renowned citizen, of some famous general or statesman. The heart of the nation worships at these as shrines. The paths by which the world's great men have climbed to such conspicuous heights of success and achievement, become shining pathways of life to beckon youth to dare and to do, to challenge and to achieve. The climax of human greatness, in the popular mind at least, is found in popular applause. Not the righteousness of God, but the favor of man, is the mark of greatness and of worth in the estimation of humanity. Before them, all these, like Nero, should be addressed as "Your Eternity," by lesser men who live upon their envy and their worship. Not one of them, nor all of them, is sufficient to save himself from the guilt of sin or restore himself to the favor of God, and not one is so great that he may be unmindful of that terrible day of the Lord's revelation, when, according to Revelation 19 : 17, "The angel standing in the sun cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the mid-heaven, come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God, that ye may eat of the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and them that

sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great." That day will level all to one common plain of nothingness. No other attitude is possible than one of profoundest humility or of most earnest supplication. For, according to Isaiah 2:12, "For there shall be a day of Jehovah of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and it shall be brought low." And Revelation 6 : 16-17. "And they say to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb, for the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand?"

Thus the times of the Gentiles shall pass. The restoration of all things shall be accomplished and His people shall gather in faith under His aegis. The nation born in a day shall become anew the glory of God, and the nations of the earth led to receive Him as King will submit to His sceptre. Righteousness and peace shall receive a permanent guarantee under the blessing of His presence. All this shall be accomplished when He comes again.

CHAPTER IV

The Return and the Judgment of the Nations

CHAPTER IV.

THE RETURN AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

An eminent English minister, being asked to what he attributed the success attending his ministry, replied: "Under God, to the habit of repetition." There is a suggestion that this same habit commended itself to the prophet Isaiah, in the sneer with which he was probably taunted by the profligates of his city when they said to him: "It is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, there a little." Following the distinguished examples, and observing on every hand the woeful ignorance of the people of God concerning the simplest doctrines of the faith, one is led to believe that both wisdom and necessity commend the habit of repetition. So, with no further explanation, repetition is here made of the items in the program of the return as generally held by pre-millennarians. There are two features of the one event. Some months ago, I went to the gate-keeper in a great city Union railroad depot and asked if the train coming into the city at nine o'clock had yet come into the station. His reply was: "The first section of that train will be in in ten minutes, the second section fifteen minutes later." This one train ran in two sections.

So the one event of the Lord's return will transpire in two features. First He is coming for

His saints. Then He returns with His saints to the earth to reign the thousand years of the millennium. The return of His saints is usually described as the "Rapture" of the church. It is also the coming of the Lord in the air. He will not at this time descend to the earth, but descending in the air above the earth, will call His saints, both the living and the dead, up to meet Him in the air. "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be forever with the Lord," I Thess. 4:16-17. "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we all shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?'"

This coming of the Lord is to be secret. It may not occasion any more general interest than the translation of Enoch or the ascension of

Elijah. The event will be known, of course, to those left in the earth who were directly interested in those who were taken. But the great pagan, non-Christian mass of humanity will not be moved by the going away of those caught up in the air to meet the Lord, more than by some seven days sensation. Some will remain with broken hearts. Some will look forward from that hour with a certain fearful expectation of judgment. But the great mass of men will neither know or care that this transcendantly wonderful event, so long foretold in scripture and looked forward to by the church, has really occurred.

The coming for His saints is also imminent. Nothing must take place now before the rapture. There is not a single event which must transpire before He comes again. It may occur at any moment. This very day, this very hour He may come, and the voice of the archangel may be heard by the sleeping dead in Christ and by the living saints who await His coming. When the church is caught up, the Holy Spirit will leave the world. II Thess. 2:7. "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is One that restraineth now, until He be taken out of the way." The gospel of grace will cease to be preached. At the same time that the Church is caught up, Satan will be cast down into the earth. Rev. 12:10-12. "And I heard a great voice in Heaven saying, Now is come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the

authority of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night. And they overcame Him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore, rejoice O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and the sea; because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." From that time forth until he is slain by the breath of the mouth of the Lord Jesus at His second coming to the earth with His saints, the anti-Christ will reign and the man of sin will dominate the earth. The rulers will only make pretense of demonstrating the law.

During this period, the covenant made with God's chosen nation will be broken. The great tribulation will occur. Satan made mad with the knowledge that his time is short, unrestrained by the presence of the Holy Spirit, will be let loose in the world where the gospel of grace is no longer preached. Raging his impotent wrath against the Most High and his Christ, he will make a literal hell on earth for the inhabitants thereof. But for the elects' sake these days of the great tribulation will be shortened, closing with the battle of Armageddon. In the midst of that battle, wherein the nations of the earth are gathered, in the valley of Jehoshaphat in conflict concerning Jerusalem, Christ will return to the earth with His saints to reign. He shall descend

upon the Mount of Olives, according to Zechariah 14:4, perhaps to the very spot from which He ascended when He went up into the heavens. Then He shall slay the anti-Christ (II Thess. 2:8.) Then He shall ascend to Mt. Zion, from which He was rejected, and there establishing His throne, shall reign in the earth for one thousand years, calling the nations into immediate judgment. Isaiah 2 : 3-4, "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." It was from this very mount that He was rejected before the judgment seat of Pontius Pilate, Matthew 27:19-23. Thus shall come the fulfillment of the second Psalm: "Why do the nations rage, and the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh; The Lord will have them in derision. Then will He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure: Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son, This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,

and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now therefore be wise, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish in the way, for His wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in Him."

For with the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ to take the throne of David, theocracy is re-established in the earth, since He who sits upon the throne is not alone the Son of Man, but the very God Himself. That throne shall never again be overturned; its reign never again shall be in abeyance. Theocracy shall never again be abandoned, Jeremiah 3 : 17. The hearts of men will have learned wisdom, and fellowship with God will universally seem to be the supreme good and the supreme joy.

THE RETURN WITH HIS SAINTS AND THE JUDGMENTS OF THE NATIONS

The climax of the ages will be Christ's descent to the earth with His saints. Before this event the nation of Israel, of Judah, will have been renationalized. Jerusalem will have become alike the center of worship and of government for the chosen, but disobedient and scattered ancient people of God. Recently I heard a distinguished Jew in an impassioned speech to his

race make a plea for the re-establishment of Palestine as a Jewish nation with a Jewish government. He declared that there were three reasons for this re-establishment. First, to remove the prejudice against the Jews as a people without a nation. Second, to give the Jew both the medium and the right to make protest against injustice, and, third, to demonstrate the Jew's efficiency as a producer of wealth, a tiller of soil, as a pursuer of fine arts. He distinctly declared that he did not make his appeal in the hope of the return of the Messiah. One was reminded in hearing him of that saying of divine truth: "The wrath of man shall praise Him, the remainder of wrath will He restrain." Surely had this Jewish leader understood, he would have known that for none of the reasons which he advocated, but specifically for the reason he rejected, Israel is to be restored. There can be no Jewish nation whose national dream is not a kingdom with David's throne re-established and David's son seated upon it.

Of the fact of the renationalization of the Jews there can today be no doubt. All the allied governments have either specifically promised or definitely approved the return of the land to the people, and will promote the return of the people to the land, so long ago given by God to His chosen and elect race. They will return and that speedily. The wealth of all the lands will begin at once to flow into Jerusalem and Judea. The Jews by virtue of their limitation of property

rights and titles in many lands, by the virtue of the very dispersion itself, have become the greatest gatherers of portable wealth in the world. Who can doubt that with this facility for gathering and their present possession of material wealth, the Jews' return will bring untold riches to the promised land. A comprehensive program of building, improving, governing will make this land the Mecca for an ever-increasing influx of the chosen people. And they will continue to be the money-makers and wealth-gatherers of the world. God has not rejected Israel. A hardening of heart has now fallen upon them for a time, but God's ways are far above our ways and His wisdom discounts all man's schemes and plans. His mercy overreaches all man's failures. The Jews will return to Palestine and make it within a few short years the richest and most profitable land in the world.

This wealth will at once become the temptation of the nations. Impatient rulers, tax-burdened people and distorted selfishness will concoct schemes to replenish the depleted treasuries of the nations when all that seems to be necessary will be the drawing of swords for a short and seemingly certain victorious campaign. The very process of such a scheme is described in the word of God in Ezekiel, 38 : 10-13.

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: "It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil de-

vice: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?" The result of that scheming had been depicted previously in verses 7 and 9. But, with the stupid blindness which always belongs to the people who are ready for destruction, these lords of the North country will be unable to sense the certainty, even the prospect of defeat and failure. It will, of course, not be the first blindness on the part of nations nor this very people, as witnessed by the proud arrogancy they displayed in the great war of 1914-1918.

When they descend upon Israel, the other league of nations, whose general territorial limitations will be those of the old Roman empire, healed and restored and re-enforced by the millions occupying this territory and governed by the general legal principles of ancient Rome,

this league of nations which has already been in contest with that league composed of the nations of the north country, will immediately assemble its armies to contest the right of the north people to plunder Israel. Jerusalem shall become the storm center of the war. The valley of Jehoshaphat will be the field of the warring nations. All the kings of the earth gathering, as they imagine, upon their own impulse, shall be really called together of God, to that slaughter of the last day. Revelation 16 : 13-16. Jerusalem will be sacked and partly deported.

In this connection it would be well to notice the rise of democracies and the participation of the peoples as well as the kings of the earth. Such hordes of armed men as have never been gathered into a war before shall assemble, so that the war shall resemble the migration of a whole people. Unconsciously they shall be brought together to the swift judgment of the descending wrath of God in the person and presence of His Son upon the Mount of Olives. One sees in the present complication of world governments' conflict, preparation for that event. For of the four world empires described by Daniel in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, Rome still survives in part, and is to be restored. Daniel 2 : 35 and 43—45. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay (autocracy and democracy) and brake them in pieces.

Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken in pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth . . . and whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as the iron doth not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people: but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever. For as much as thou sawest a stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

It thus appears that the renationalization of Israel shall not be for peace, nor in the purpose of God, for the making secure through the world league of nations, a permanent peace and good will among men. War is determined, and such war as the world has never endured. The league of nations would seem to indicate the healing of the Roman empire and its re-establishment under

another name now, but with the same territorial and governmental complexion. Revelation 13:12, "He maketh the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed." Compare this with Daniel 7:23, "The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise, and another shall arise after them and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings." Now add to this Revelation 13:1, "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy." Verse 3, "And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death, and his death stroke was healed, and the whole earth wondered after the beast."

Then the "stone cut out without hand," as described in Daniel 2:45, will from the mount of God utterly crush and destroy the assembled nations. The very stone which the builders rejected will then become the head of the corner.

There is an ancient legend that during the building of the temple the builders engaged thereon found early in the building a stone peculiar of shape and character. They could not determine any place into which it might fit, for all the masonry, remember, was done in quarries and no

sound of hammers or saw was heard upon the temple in all its seven years of building. This peculiar stone was then thrust aside as of no use. Gradually it was covered with debris from the building till it was completed, except for the chief corner stone which was nowhere to be found. After much search and long delay, some one remembered that there had been a stone fitting the general description of this missing corner stone. So search was made, and it was dugged out from beneath the debris which had hidden it, and became the very head of the corner of that temple of God.

Thus it shall be among the nations. Christ is rejected of men, despised of the rulers of this earth, little regarded as a ruler of the kings of the earth as He is described in Revelation 1:5 to be. But in that day of the wrath of God, He shall be restored to His rightful place. Having been rejected of the Jews, He shall be received and honored and worshiped by them. Having been rejected by the nations, He shall now become the head of the nations, the ruler of the kings of the earth. It will be in the midst of the great conflict that Christ shall descend from heaven with His saints. His feet shall be planted upon the Mount of Olives, which under the majesty and might of His kingly tread shall tremble and dissolve asunder as if rent by an earthquake. Kings, rulers, governors and captains, looking toward that majestic figure, shall fall down as dead men,

and whole armies shall perish, with the anti-Christ who leads them, by the blight of His breath, the sword of His mouth.

It may be recalled that when the mob came up to arrest Him in the garden of Gethsemane and their leaders said to Him: "We seek Jesus of Nazareth," the Master answered: "I am He." The "He," as translated, is written in italics, indicating that it does not appear in the original. So the answer of this royal person was "I am," the very name given in the covenant relation between God and His people to Moses when he was commanded to lead his people out of Egypt. It was at that name, holy and unapproachable, the covenant name of divine relation pronounced by His holy and royal lips, that the strange mob in the garden of tragic sorrow, went backward and fell on their faces. Thus, even while He was being rejected and being made ready for the cross upon which the cruel hands of evil men must directly hang Him, how much more shall it be so when He descends from heaven with ten thousands of His saints; when He shall have marshaled His holy angels to go to and fro in all the earth separating the good from the bad; when He shall have come for judgment. Then every eye shall see Him, and those who have pierced Him, also all those who have set themselves against Him, who are even now so tumultuously assembled to cast off His bands and to break His cords asunder. In the terror of that moment, multitudes shall die, other

multitudes in unmitigated panic will turn every man his sword against his brother and there shall be such slaughter at Armageddon as has not been witnessed before in the whole earth.

This will be the climax of Satan's unhindered reign in the earth. Not a universal brotherhood, but a universal slaughter; not the peaceful pursuits of art and commerce and politics, not the humanizing of all the grosser, more brutal forces in the earth, but the destruction of them all. The nations, reeling like drunken men, shall be beaten down and crushed to death. This is the meaning of Matthew 21:42-44, "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, the stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner; this was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And he that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust."

THE CHURCH SAVES THE WORLD

Some one will doubtless ask: "If there is no event that must transpire before the coming of the Lord for His saints and the swift bringing of the great tribulation with the unrestrained presence of Satan in the earth, why does not that terrible and portentous event fall now? What hinders the coming again of Christ? What saves

the world from this judgment now?" It may be answered that the only thing which saves the world from this judgment is the presence of the church in the world. It was that which the Master meant when he said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." "Ye are the light of the world." The unmitigated sorrow of absolute lawlessness in the world is now restrained by the presence of the church. The Christian body, like salt, is both aseptic and antiseptic. It anticipates corruption and prevents it. It pursues corruption and destroys it, even in the hearts of men as in their homes, their business, their politics, in their souls and bodies. So, if the cup of iniquity takes longer in its filling, the wrath of God is to that extent restrained in its manifestation. But the time will come in the providence of God when the church shall be caught away as the bride is taken into the inner chamber of the bridegroom.

At that time the scriptures seem to indicate that the Holy Spirit will leave the earth, II Thess. 2 : 7, as He sometimes leaves a man now, though that same man may have been under the restraint of His presence and His appeal and thus long withheld from his just punishment. Thus under Satan's control the world shall reach its climax of fleshly and worldly indulgences. Did not the Master Himself forewarn against this very contingency? Matthew 24:37-39, "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the

flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark. And they knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." How typical of this generation of self-indulgence, materialism and rationalism that is. The whole program of the carnal world today, eating, drinking, marrying, unrestrained of natural appetites. There is nothing so wrong in all this, save that Satan controlling them, they thrust God beneath the threshold of consciousness in human life and rule Him definitely and decisively out of His world.

That is a picture of the refinement of carnality, the exploitation of the natural man under the refining influence of social and esthetic culture.

Then there is a striking and typical analogy in the experience of Noah and his generation that is anticipated by the church and this generation. Noah was taken into the ark and made secure there against the breaking of the floods. His generation, mocking, amused, superciliously superior to all his pessimistic warnings, went on its way utterly untouched by his message until he was taken into the ark and saved. And then the flood came. So in the last day the church will be caught into the ark of the upper air with her Lord and then destruction will fall upon the earth. It is said in Luke 17:28, "Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded."

Here carnality has become the curse, no hint of marriage nor of giving in marriage. Free love has swept with its devastating fires of lust through the age. A prosperous age it is, with carnal indulgences everywhere manifest. Eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, growing rich, and out of the temptation of riches falling into every new snare of the devil, until the wrath of God can no longer be restrained, and His Son must return to visit sudden and swift vengeance upon the sinners and the nations that forget God. But let us rejoice that as Lot, though a poor, carnal, worldly servant of God, unworthy to the last degree, was snatched from Sodom before its destruction, so will even an unworthy church be caught away to be with the Lord whose presence will be to her the judgment of her works.

You who scorn the church today, think! You who turn away from this loving invitation, consider! What is the church doing now? Though its voice, its people, its messages, sometimes seem obscure, still it is warning, inviting, waiting. Its very presence is a protest against sin, a warning against judgment, a pointing to the way of escape. It matters not that its warnings fall upon deaf ears and dull hearts and an unresponsive world. Its presence still invites men to accept the love of God that would save now through His Christ, and warns them of the wrath of God that must avenge through the rejection of this same Christ. The last chapter of the Book warns with great

solemnity against the unrighteousness of the wicked, of the urgent necessity for washing their robes and finding access to the tree of life. A solemn warning is issued to some who shall be shut without the gates of life. They are listed in the fifteenth verse, and following this the Master earnestly asseverates: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star." It is in this connection that the statement so often quoted and misapplied is made: "The Spirit and the bride say, come." Both have their voices turned heavenward in expectation of His coming. Both are yearning for and praying for His return.

Let everyone who hears, join this cry, hastening the coming of the King. In the meantime, while we wait, the Spirit and the bride and those who hear, turn to the sinning, suffering, doom-inviting world and cry: "He that will, let him take of the water of life freely." This is the day of grace. Prepare now against that day of judgment. This is the hour of mercy. Be forewarned and enter into the joy of the Lord now before it be too late.

CHAPTER V

The Millennial Kingdom

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THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

The kingdom of God appears in the earth under three aspects. First, under the reign of law; second, under the reign of grace; third, under the reign of a Person. It will be observed that this kingdom covers all time and all events connected with God's rule in the earth. It will embrace the time and the events in which God walked in the garden in the cool of the day and our earliest progenitors heard His voice, and, unafraid, communed with Him in the familiar fellowship of a daily service. It will also embrace that ultimate period in which, delivered from the limitations of sense, faith shall be swallowed up in sight and His servants shall serve Him as they shall again see His face. Within that period lie the tragedies of the fall and its consequences. The multitudinous miracles of mercy by which He sought to restore man and make conquest anew of the kingdom lost to Himself in the earth through sin, are all included.

God has never given up the world. It is not an incident of the incarnation that God loves the world. It is an essential and fundamental fact of His eternal being. The Christ who came in the end of the ages in actual fact had been

slain before the foundation of the world. The saints redeemed by Him were chosen in Him before times eternal. So all efforts and events connected with the conquest of the kingdom, the restoration of the world to fellowship with God, the transformation of a people from rebels to sons and the ultimate surrender of the kingdom by the Son to the Father, all these are involved in the kingdom of God in the earth.

Strange how difficult it is for Bible students to see that practically the whole revelation of this book has to do with the kingdom of God in the earth. But little is said of heaven. That little is illustrative of conditions to be obtained in the earth when the kingdom of God is established here. The goal to which the purposes of God and the desires of men alike run throughout the Book, is a new earth in which righteousness shall prevail and peace shall be the portion of all peoples.

UNDER THE REIGN OF LAW

Law began with the creation of man and his establishment as over-lord in the earth creation. The first prohibition limiting privilege in the midst of the garden wherein he dwelt by divine appointment, was a recognition of the sovereignty of God and the subject nature of man. With the rebellion of man and his ejection from the garden, followed by the subsequent perversity of moral conduct, ever increasing, ever becoming more

malignant, law expanded its operations, multiplied its statutes and with various modifications enforced its penalties in every directions upon human life. Law had its climax of expression in the establishment of the nation Israel, which was designed from the beginning to be a theocratic government, pattern and illustration to all nations and the peoples of the earth.

The government of Israel purported to be the government of God in the midst of a *chosen nation*. Its laws were the expression of the divine will, the requirements of the divine law. They were but the codification of those eternal principles of law by which God governs men. Let it be remembered that law, the divine government begun in Eden, never changed its fundamental principles or penalties. Law established, announced that the one unfailing penalty for its violation was death. Now all sin is lawlessness, rebellion against the divine government, treachery to the divine governor. Satan, who is the instigator of sin in the human heart and the prompter of sins in the human life, is himself arch traitor. Having been entrusted by God with the government of this world, with especial reference to the worship and obeisance to be rendered unto God, he seized upon that worship and allegiance which belongs to God and perverted it to himself.

Satan, the supreme lawless one (called throughout the Book "that old serpent, the devil," "the slanderer," "the murderer," "liar," "accuser

of the brethren," "the dragon," "the lawless one"), has set himself against God, and as the god of this world has for all centuries since the beginning dominated the larger portion of the human race. His institutions counter the divine institution; his standards, customs, ideals oppose those of the heavenly Ruler. He counterfeits and imitates and substitutes the things of God at every turn. He blinds and deceives and leads astray the men taken captive to do his will. He indwells men as the Holy Spirit indwells them. He is moving on toward climacteric effort to gain final supremacy in the earth and make good his claim eternally to be the god of this world.

In the light of divine revelation we know that this lawless one shall be destroyed.—II Thessalonians 2 :8. After Satan has had unlimited sway and unhindered power for a brief period in the earth he shall be bound and cast into the lake of fire.—Revelation 12 :7-12 and Revelation 20 :3-10.

But the theocratic idea in government seemed doomed to failure under the reign of law. His own people were ever stiff-necked resisters of the Holy Spirit.—Acts 7. In spite of signs and wonders, in spite of the Presence declared by the pillar of cloud and of fire, by the tent of meeting, by the altars that burned with heaven enkindled fire, by deliverances and provisions, by miracles of His disciplinary mercies, His people went from bad to worse, until, in the climax of sinful rebel-

lion against Him, they demanded a king like the nations round about them.—I Samuel 8. That kingdom was established, but soon went down in failure. Thus the failure of the kingdom, the theocracy became an illustration of the failure of the evolutionary theory of the kingdom. It began in splendor. It ended in gloom. It began with the divine appointment of a king. It ended—the reproach of the nations. Law which at the first declared itself supreme, at the last acknowledged itself dethroned. Its very promise and providence are held in abeyance until this hour, and its reign waits to be resumed upon the coming of One, who in Himself is the fulfillment of all law and all righteousness.

But no failure discourages God. As it was written concerning Absalom, God has provided that the banished should return. It is not His will that any should perish, nor that He Himself should lose the throne of the world. What the law could not do, other means may accomplish. One failure does not exhaust the resources of God. Love prevails over all. The divine sovereignty cannot be set aside. There can be but one outcome to the conflict between God and Satan. Always taking into account man as a moral agent, never willing to coerce him into subjection to the divine sovereign, God yet moves forward with deliberate purpose toward the establishment of His kingdom and the confession unto Him of every tongue and the bending before Him

of every knee. The reign of law is only suspended, superseded by the reign of grace.

THE REIGN OF GOD UNDER GRACE

In Romans 8 : 1-4 the apostle Paul writes: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Thus grace supersedes law as a medium of holiness or of God's reign in the earth. Through grace God transfers the penalty for the violation of His law, the penalty for sins from the sinner to His Son. Since Christ Jesus the Lord came into the earth, being God, manifest in the flesh, offered Himself as king, was rejected and then voluntarily assumed the sin and guilt of the whole race of rebel sinners against God, the issue between God and man has been not man's sins, but God's Son. In Christ the forgiveness of sins is provided and a covering for sin made effective. In the cross, the last barrier of sins between God and man is removed. It is God's nature to communicate Himself as the sun radiates its light and heat. From His own Person, grace, mercy, loving kindness, are communicated

to man. By faith man establishes contact with God through Christ, through whom He imparts to man a new nature apart from any merit upon the sinner's part.

All this has been foreshadowed under the law. No story could more explicitly set forth this very reign of grace than the story of the goat of Azazel. A high priest, cleansed by the blood of a bull borne *for himself* within the veil and offered upon the golden mercy seat, coming forth takes the blood of a ram on whose head the guilt of sinners was laid in the transference of sin from themselves to their substitute. Thus the goat was slain and the blood borne within the veil. The returning sinless priest bore token and decree of cleansing for the whole people, the priest upon their behalf laying his hands upon the head of the living goat, the goat of removal, transferred to him the death which sin had wrought, the guilt for which they were responsible, which was then borne into the wilderness in the person of their substitute, the goat of removal, never to return.

The foreshadowing of the reign of grace during the reign of law, was in order that men might know that the law was not to be abrogated, but that its demands, beyond the power of man to discharge; its fulfillments, beyond the ability of man to accomplish; its penalty, beyond the nature of man to endure, are to be transferred under the reign of grace from the sinner to the Saviour. Christ is the end of the law for

righteousness to every one who believes. Again it is written: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," and, as quoted above in Romans 8 : 1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Again let it be said that the issue between God and sinners is not now their sins, but His Son. The question is not, What will you do about your sins? but, What will you do with the Son of God, who offers Himself as the sinner's substitute; who, though "He knew no sin, became sin on our behalf"; "who in His own body bore our sins upon the cross that we, having died unto sin, might live unto righteousness." What, then, will you do with Jesus, the sinless Son of God? is the challenge to every man's conscience and to every man's soul. The Holy Spirit, coming to the earth, has but one theme—the things of this very Christ. He takes them and reveals them to men. He takes them and by them offers redemption and salvation complete through Christ, unmerited by the sinner. For Christ is made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. The Lord Jesus Himself while yet upon the earth, speaking to His people about the office and ministry of the Holy Spirit, declared, "When He is come He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; of sin because they believe not on Me." The one reproof the Holy Spirit brings to men is therefore

the reproof of that infidelity which rejects God's provision for our sins in the Person of His Son; which refuses the divine mercy offered in the Person of His Son, which neglects the compassionate love made ready in the Person of His Son.

Men have had much difficulty about the unpardonable sin. Many theories have been advanced, many explanations offered. The matter is too simple to require even a debate. The one unpardonable sin for which there is never forgiveness either in this life or in the life to come—the sin against the Holy Spirit, can only be the rejection of that divine Son of God, of whom the Holy Spirit ever speaks and concerning whom it is said: "He shall not speak of Himself. He shall take the things that are mine (the Son's) and show them to you."

This, then, is the day of grace. This age is the age of mercy. God's compassion as displayed in Christ and offered in His gospel message throughout the world today—opposed, rejected, ridiculed though it often is, nevertheless persists against all opposition. The outstretched arms of the Son typify the whole attitude of God to a lost race as He says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

But let it be remembered that *this* is the day of grace. There is no other. There is no second chance. Love will yet turn into jealousy; mercy will yet be outraged into wrath; compassion will yet give place to vengeance, and He

who is now offered as Saviour will sit upon the throne of judgment as Judge. Therefore let men be warned. "Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish in the way when His wrath is kindled but a little." With how many illustrations does God warn men of the evil of persistent unbelief, of continued hardening of heart and making stiff their necks. Esau counted his birthright a vain possession, dallied in fatal dalliance with the privileges of the divine covenant and threw away in wanton carnality the heavenly blessing. The time came when with tears he sought a place of repentance and found it not. His father was unable to change the fiat of divine justice. For us all it has been truly written:

"There is a line by us unseen
That crosses every path,
The hidden boundary between
God's mercy and His wrath.
To cross that line is to die—
To die as if by stealth.
It does not quench the blooming eye
Nor dim the glow of health.
How long may man go on to sin;
How long will God forbear?
Where does mercy end
And where begin the confines of despair?
An answer from the sky is seen,
You who from God depart;
Today if you would hear His voice,
Repent and harden not your heart."

The Saviour came into the world, offered Himself and was rejected as King. *But He did not give up being King.* He yet offered Himself

as Saviour, forewarning that He must sooner or later be enthroned as Lord. By the Holy Spirit then He is being offered to this generation as its Saviour. All who will may in Him escape the condemnation of God's broken, violated and rejected law. All who will may in Him be restored to fellowship with the divine Saviour and Father and brought into harmony with the eternal King. This Saviour shall reappear soon as Judge and King. There is a divine oath concerning Him that He is to sit upon the throne of His Father David and rule the nations. Then shall those be ruled with a rod of iron and the rebellious against Him shall be broken as a potter's vessel. Wisdom exhorts all men therefore today to make peace, immediate peace, with God through the Son. "Now, therefore be wise, oh ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish in the way, for wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in Him."

THE REIGN OF A PERSON

Let it never be doubted that the kingdom of God will ultimately reach its climax and realization in the reign of God in the earth through the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Many times do the scriptures promise that He shall returned and take the throne of His glory in the earth. He is to occupy the throne of His

Father David at Jerusalem. Before Him the nations of the earth will be gathered for judgment and over the nations of the earth He will rule. Under His beneficent reign every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree. Then the nations will make war no more. Swords shall be converted into plowshares and spears into reaping hooks in His kingdom of peace. The implements of war shall be converted into the implements of peace. He is not the Prince of Peace now, but He is to be. He is Priest of God now and awaits the coming of the day when, as King of Salem, King of Peace and righteousness, He shall occupy the throne and administer the government of this world. What a day that will be! Satan bound for a thousand years; the administration of government committed to His saints, in whose hands shall be found no bribes and in whose hearts no injustice shall rule! The kingdom of heaven shall find its application and realization in the earth. The nations shall come unto Mount Zion to obtain their laws and shall with delight hang upon the lips of Jehovah as He expounds unto them righteousness and justice and truth and establishes them in that peace and prosperity which can only flow out of established righteousness and truth.

THE MILLENNIUM

The Revelation promises the earth one thousand years in which Satan shall be bound and

during which the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign with His saints in the earth. The inauguration of this millennial kingdom is to be cataclysmic. It is to be begun with the judgment of the nations. For measured by one standard of righteousness, not a single human scheme of government can be pronounced anything else than a complete and hopeless failure in the earth. The world proceeds today not in evolutionary process of progress. But devolutionary processes of deterioration are everywhere in evidence. Man, whose age was once about nine hundred years, is now at his best estate permitted to live eighty. The nations that once forgot God now deliberately repudiate Him. The peoples who waited once upon His law now reject all law. Like that world, which was without form and void until the Holy Spirit brooded over it and brought order into being, the moral world today is in chaos. Anarchy reigns over a mighty portion of the human race. There is but one remedy left.

There is no hope that out of the evil seed of unregenerate humanity a millennial kingdom will evolve. The golden age of the race does not lie before us if we are left to our own devices and means by which to produce it. No, there is to be a cataclysmic windup to the whole human program. Suddenly the Son of God is to descend from heaven to earth, sweep aside the governments which exercise authority while perpetrating a veritable travesty upon justice and upon

truth. He will himself seize the reins of government and rule over all nations as is His right to do.

The Scriptures seem to be clear in the statement of these facts: Before He returns to reign upon the earth there is to be a resurrection of the Christian dead. Those Christians who remain alive at His coming are to be translated, and with the resurrected Christian dead are to be caught up into the air to be forever with the Lord. Following this rapture of the church, the period of the great tribulation shall ensue upon the earth in which Satan, loosed and unhindered, mad with the knowledge that his time is short, shall work his will, in unspeakable persecution, upon the nations and the people of the earth. The deliverance from this reign of devilish terror is one of the petitions incorporated into what we know as the Lord's Prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Then the Lord Jesus Christ shall return to the earth with His saints to reign. The nations shall be gathered before Him and judged. The basis of judgment will probably be their relation to Israel. Satan shall be bound for one thousand years, and Christ, upon the throne of His Father David, shall restore theocracy in the midst of the nation Israel, ruling the earth in righteousness and truth.

Some one may ask: Is not this veritable speculation? It is not indeed the vain imaginings

of diseased minds. Let no one so conclude. Search the Scriptures. They are they which testify of these things in relation to the Son of God. The time is fast approaching. Now is salvation nearer than when we first believed. Now is the day of salvation. The crisis of the ages is upon us. The need is urgent. The danger is great. The doom promised for failure is unspeakably horrible. Close now with the offer of divine mercy. Engage now the one advocate against that day when your only appeal will be from the judge to the advocate.

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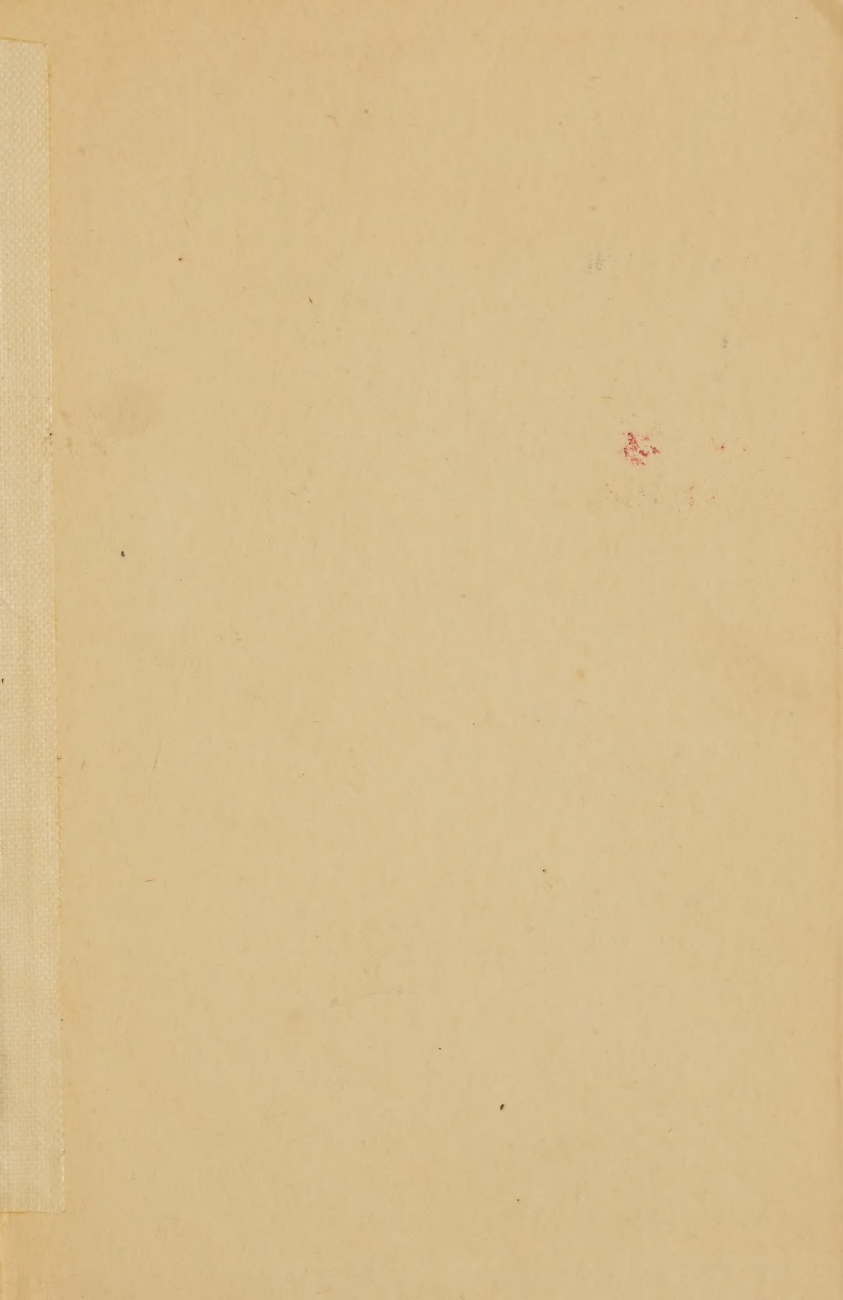
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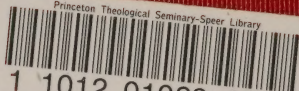
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